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# NORTH OF THE TWEED;

OR

LORANCE LANGTON:

HIS LIFE, INCIDENTS, AND ADVENTURES  
IN SCOTLAND.

BY

DANIEL CROWBERRY.

"Should you, Sir Stranger, want a book,  
And cast on me a passing look;  
Heed not my outward shape or tone,  
But purchase, open, and read on.  
This done, next, when my parts you scan,  
Remember, sir, your fellow man."

THE BOOK.

VOL. III.

London:

T. CAUTLEY NEWBY, PUBLISHER,  
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1867.

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# NORTH OF THE TWEED.

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## CHAPTER I.

### LORANCE LANGTON—HIS DOVE—VISITORS AND A PARCEL.

DURING his sojourn at the Creels, Lorance Langton extended considerably the area of his acquaintance in the wild neighbourhood. This lay chiefly amongst the shepherds, cottagers, and frugal farmers. With many of the simple incidents and local traditions of rustic life related to him among the hills he was peculiarly interested, and he had a happy way about him of always

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drawing individuals into the vein, if so gifted, of story-telling. Sometimes it was a man, sometimes a woman, sometimes a ghost, sometimes a fierce bull, and sometimes a sagacious dog, that became the elected hero or heroine of the tale ; still all was the same to him, provided the story was original and well told ; and though often bordering on the marvellous, he yet had a ready and patient ear for the delivery. To listen to them recounting these in their native tongue, on their native soil—his own fatherland—after years of absence among foreign sounds and distant countries, seemed to him an occupation of intrinsic pleasure. In himself he possessed the rare *art of being happy*, and this art he often exerted successfully upon others around him, and the timid child and the diffident parent soon felt at their ease in his presence.

In his manners, and about him, there was something like an exhilarating glow, a blithsome freshness, that cheered and conciliated whithersoever he went, and, as occasion required, insen-

sibly thawed down the icy barriers that surrounded the most cold and reserved of those with whom he came in contact. Heroes and heroines for the hour he found everywhere, and possessed a happy mode of always humouring their whims without appearing to notice them. With a keen appreciation of the eccentricities and peculiarities of character, and being sufficiently conversant with natural history to note the manners, habits, and characteristics of the common objects around him, he found interest and amusement at every foot-step. Plants, trees, and animals—all in turn came in for his admiration. But, probably from early association, he was passionately fond of our wild-dove or cushat, decidedly the most noble, graceful, and truly the *elite* of all the Columbarian tribe ; and properly domesticated, it becomes the most docile and companionable creature of the bird race, and is, moreover, the most unobjectionable in its domestic habits. That he should now appreciate and cherish fondly the interesting bird of this species which he had received from

Mrs. Cockburn and her child, under the extraordinary circumstances previously related, may be readily conceived. Since that event, a proper perch has been framed for her, and, being light and movable, it is frequently brought to the dinner table, where, receiving her occasional crumbs of bread, she sits by his side with the grace and good manners of a young lady.

With the entire liberty of his sitting-room, but seldom leaving her own allotted place, she deports herself with exemplary decorum, and receives her attentions under the title of Lady *Dye*, thus deriving her name from the stream on whose wooded banks she was taken from the nest.

Already so familiar has she become with her new possessor, that almost whenever called upon — done by addressing her caressingly, and imitating with his voice the sounds of the wild-dove—she will pour out her sweet and soft tones, coo-coo, coo-coo, bowing her head and raising her train in a manner so graceful and courtly as to



become truly enchanting ; and this she will do by night as by day, when so invited.

One evening, seated by the table over his wine after dinner, and thus amusing himself with his feathered companion, a soft tap was heard at the door of his room.

“Come in,” was the response ; and immediately entered the blooming Nelly.

“Tway men at the door, sir, want t’ speak to ye,” said the brown-eyed maid, decked out in her evening apparel, and in figure vastly improved since we last took her portrait.

“Desire them to come in,” returned Lorange, retaining his seat.

The two men entered, and apologising for their intrusion, expressed a wish to have a little private conversation with him.

He beckoned them to be seated, replying, with a smile, that he should not adjudge their visit an intrusion unless constrained to do so by the nature of their business.

One of them was dressed in a black short-coat, pantaloons of the same hue, and wore a white neckcloth ; was of a spare figure, contrasted with that of his companion, and had nothing of the rustic cast in his appearance.

The other was tall, of a stout and vigorous frame, well-proportioned ; wore a loose velveteen square coat, corduroy breeches, with pearl buttons at the knees, gray stockings, showing a pair of brawny legs, and a pair of strong boots, laced tightly round his ankles, on his feet. His head and face were peculiarly round, surmounted by an abundant growth of dark and curled hair. His countenance denoted sagacity and shrewdness. His age might be about forty years.

Lorance looked with some interest on the features of the latter, impressed with the idea that he had seen them before, some years since, but resolved for the present to waive recognition, unless challenged, which on the other side was modestly declined.

“Maister Sherra,” said the latter, addressing his companion, “ye had better state t’ the gentleman the nature o’ our business.”

“Sir,” said the other, evidently the appointed spokesman, rising to his feet and drawing from under his arm a square parcel of considerable size, “I have taken upon me the liberty to call and solicit your inspection of this package of papers.”

“Of what do they consist, friend?” inquired Lorraine.

“They are anent — in short, they contain the memoirs of a native of this part of the country, as also sundry other miscellaneous writings and correspondence, alleged by their present possessor to be of some value, as literary property, and thereby of public interest.”

“Of whom are they the memoirs, and by whom written?”

“The author, sir, of the manuscript is altogether unknown, and the name of the subject will be found in the biographical sketch.”

“Now, friend,” said Lorange, will you explain to me if I, a stranger here, am supposed by you to have any personal interest in the matter? if not, then mention to me the object you have in view by thus desiring my inspection of the papers. I shall then be able to say whether or not I can undertake their perusal.”

“They are the property, sir, of a spinster lady, much reduced in circumstances,” replied the spokesman, “who desires for her benefit to dispose of the MS. to some respectable publisher; and, having in herself no direct medium to employ for this purpose, she has solicited my humble and insignificant aid on her behalf.”

“I am afraid,” replied the auditor smiling, “that some mistake must have occurred respecting my supposed calling. I am not a publisher, nor yet in any way connected with literature.”

“In calling upon you, sir, we did not presume to judge of your occupation,” said the other, submissively; “but being assured that you were a very approachable and benevolent gentleman, and

conceiving that you might have some acquaintance with men engaged in literature, with whom you could interpose your influence, we made bold to submit the matter to you, feeling confident that you would at least forgive the trespass."

"Most assuredly I do. Pray, may I ask the name of the lady?"

"If you will not think it rude, I would rather decline answering that question, until you have had an opportunity of considering at your leisure whether you would be pleased to favour her project."

"Your reply, sir," returned Lorange, "is a very proper one; and if you now choose to leave the papers, and call again in three days, I will then be able to say how far I can serve you in the business."

With this the conference ended, and the men departed.

Now, while this treasure of literature is undergoing a brief inspection, we will endeavour to entertain the reader with a brief account of its

earlier history, which we have derived from a private source.

About the gray of the evening, says our informant, several years ago, a tall gentleman, in a spare figure, black coat, and horn spectacles, called at the kitchen-door of the Ha' house of Cacklebraes, left a parcel copiously sealed up in brown paper, and immediately departed, and was never again seen or heard of there.

The name of the mysterious visitor was unknown, at least so far as went the general belief, though family doubts were awakened on the point, because of some purple traces observable round the eyes of a certain fair member, which continued thereon for three days after its delivery. There was, moreover, something strange about the superscription of the parcel. Upon the cover was written in large round letters, "*For the First-born*" heavily underlined.

Now, the first-born of this family had in her time been a comely lass; but, as with the fairest of our flowers, her bloom was not destined

to continue for ever; and whisper at this time had gone so far as to insinuate that something contained in this gift had not improved her looks.

The indisputable rights of Jeanie, the eldest daughter, were at once declared, and the property was speedily conveyed to her room, where she remained at the outset locked up with it for the space of two hours. But as the lady always afterwards observed a profound silence on the subject of its contents—indeed betrayed some sensitiveness whenever it was alluded to—it continued to all but herself a mystery until forgotten.

For some succeeding years not the most remote allusion had been made to it, till, upon an occasion when the lady was in the act of stooping, something was seen to drop from her bosom, unobserved by herself.

The small object was picked up by a younger sister, and when examined, was found to be a fragment of the brown paper cover, cut into the form of a heart, bearing an inscription in the

same round letters, 'For the First-born," and on the obverse side was written, in red ink, in a female hand, *Jeanie*.

At length, grown weary of keeping the contents of the parcel treasured up under lock and key, which, though doubtless associated with something painful to her mind she deemed of inestimable value, she resolved upon making a confidant of a friend, upon whose discretion and counsel she could place implicit reliance.

This treasure, when disclosed, was found to consist of nothing less valuable than a sheaf of papers of sundry shapes and sizes, in manuscript, written on both sides with ink that had once been black, but now changed by time to a saffron colour. The sheets, from marginal and other finger-marks, bore evident traces of frequent perusal.

Indeed, it was stated to us, that every year, as the seasons rolled round, they had been read and spelled out (no easy task, the interlineations taken into account) from beginning to end.



The confidential friend to whom the treasure was disclosed—by name Tammie, but commonly denominated Dominie Sherra—was an auxiliary schoolmaster in a distant village, belonging to the parish of Lapperton.

Being a man, according to the lady's estimation, of profound learning and vast knowledge in all matters appertaining to penmanship, from copy-heads up to Johnson's *Dictionary*, consequently a critic and competent judge in authorship, she could not, she thought, confide the project she had now in view to better hands.

She accordingly wrote an epistle (curt, for a lady, as appears) to this learned gentleman, and, after a selection of certain pieces therefrom, addressed the package to his residence.

In her first communication, she had observed a strict secrecy with respect to its history and authorship, and simply requested the favour of his opinion upon the merits of the composition.

The report of the Dominie fully realised the high expectations of his correspondent. After

expatiating at some length upon its merits, he exhorted her, in fervent terms, to consign no longer under lock and key to the profitless use of moths and worms, that which he averred was calculated to edify and entertain the minds of millions, and at the same time, yield to its owner more than a competent sustenance for the rest of her life.

From this hour the lady's mind was made up, and something like a vision of herself in a new black satin dress glided across the room before her. She determined, in short, upon the immediate publication of the MS.

This, the main difficulty overcome, as she alleged, measured by the violent struggle her feelings had undergone in making up her mind to part with that which was so secretly endeared to her, there remained for enactment but the trifling commercial part of the business, which, in her opinion, resolved itself into a nut-shell—viz., to name the price and find the purchaser.

For this end a personal interview between her-

self and confidant was deemed desirable, which resulted in a pledge from the latter to undertake the disposal of the copyright, and to invest the proceeds as he should further be instructed by her.

In an isolated locality, and cut off from the world of letters, with which of late years he had not held much intercourse, beyond receiving a weekly newspaper at the fifth hand, and furnishing an annual statistical report of the population of his district, Mr. Sherra began now calmly to survey the ocean of enterprise around him, and to sound his way into its midst. At the outset he had foreseen certain embarrassments, but as he steered onwards he gradually discovered that what seemed at first but small specks above the surface, eventually rose into vast shoals and reefs of rocks, against which his bark of hope, in these unknown waters, was often in imminent danger of shipwreck. In this predicament he bethought himself of a pilot, and the first question that occurred was, where should he find one? To

whom might he apply for an answer to this question? While in this perplexed state he chanced to cast his eyes upon a periodical visitor to the village, whose intercourse with the surrounding world was decidedly more extensive than his own, but whose avocation might be put down as at the very antipodes of literature. Still, as a drowning man catches at straws, and in the dearth of more feasible counsellors, he conceived the notion of confiding to him the nature of his case.

In the thinly-populated district of Kittlenaket there was an humble but respectable inn, known by the name of "The Moor-hen;" and in this inn there was a small quiet parlour to which the Dominie occasionally resorted to learn the news, pass an evening-hour, and blow a tranquil cloud after his day of toil. It was in this room, some years previously, that he had first made the acquaintance of the visitor, who, in his wandering avocation, was in the habit of taking up his abode within the house for a few days at a time,

and whom, let us at once inform our reader, was none other than his former acquaintance, the Owner of the Van. With the calling and character of this individual, he is, therefore, already somewhat acquainted. In this locality the travelling merchant was well known and esteemed for his honourable dealings and intelligence. His natural shrewdness, and general knowledge of business, even beyond the pale of his own calling, frequently rendered him a useful counsellor to many of the country-folks while on his periodical circuits, and even the first gentry of the land would occasionally draw up upon the road to learn the distant news, or have a passing word or joke with him. His acquaintance in this way amongst men in different stations of life, therefore, was very extensive.

That the schoolmaster, in his remote sphere and literary dilemma, should have sought the counsel of this roving gentleman was not so unnatural as apparently ridiculous. In the parlour of the inn the two had now met for the purpose of delibera-

ting upon the projected scheme for the publication of the MS. The business was duly opened by Mr. Sherra, with some eulogistic remarks upon the literary merits of the composition, while his auditor listened to the same with becoming gravity and decorum. He did not deem it necessary, he observed, in a confidential manner, to withhold, the name of the owner of the property ; but he abstained from any allusion to the mysterious mode by which it came into the lady's possession, and simply stated that it had fallen to her by rightful inheritance, the authorship being a profound secret. His services, he said, had been solicited, and as she was now in somewhat straitened circumstances, he was desirous of finding a purchaser, and disposing of the copyright to the utmost advantage. For this end he had exhausted the few sources at his command and in return had received but little else than laconic rebuffs, or disdainful refusals. What, then, he now desired, was to obtain the influence of some man of position, or of literary name, to

bring the manuscript under the especial notice of a good and liberal publisher, and the lady's fortune was made. And knowing that his listener had some acquaintance with literary characters, he had sought his counsel, and, if need be, his aid as a medium in the first instance.

In this last remark, oddly as it may seem, the schoolmaster was so far correct, for the popularity of his listener among several of this class was well known in the country. He was a renowned angler, and fond of all kinds of sport and athletic games, though sternly opposed, in all its forms, to poaching, and in most of these, the wielding of the rod excepted, he was contented with the privilege of the spectator. In the indulgence of these propensities, together with his itinerant occupation, he had become known to many persons of superior rank but similar tastes. He could boast, in his time, of once having had a closely-contested angling match with the illustrious Christopher North, who, however, gained the victory over him by one head of fish. By the

Professor, and many others perhaps less celebrated in the same walk, he had received distinguished marks of favour ; and from his honourable character, his mother-wit, and respectful deportment, together with his local knowledge of roads, inns, streams, and salmon pools, which to strangers were frequently serviceable, he was often regarded in the light of a privileged intruder.

“ Now, Mr. Sherra,” said the merchant, gravely, “ since ye hae done me the compliment to take me into yer confidence in this matter, I’ll promise ye, in the first place, no t’ abuse it ; and, in the second, I may tell ye that I ken the leddie, an’, atween you an’ me, hae done her a bit service afore now, an’ will be glad again if I can do her another. But ye’ll remember, Mr. Sherra, that yin in ma situation has but little in his power in a business o’ this sort ; still I’ll promise t’ ye t’ do ma best. Had it been tway-three years syne, I could hae done mair than I can do now.”

Here he raised his broad hand to his forehead and pressed it with his palm, then continued,



“ The country-side, as well as ma humble sel, has now lost yin o’ its best freends for the like o’ this business, an’ mony yin will miss him forby me ; an’ that same was the great Christopher, as he was aye ca’d. This country had only heard o’ yin like him, an’ that was the good Sir Walter, although the last was rather afore ma time. Yet I’ve often, when a bare-headed laddie, held his gallaway when he had jumpt off, an’ was handin’ about his snuff-box an’ crackin’ away t’ ma father, an’ the lave o’ the company, in his familiar and jocular way, just as he had been yin o’ oursels.”

“ But the Professor is yet alive, and I hope will long continue to be so,” said the school-master.

“ Yes, Mr. Sherra,” rejoined the other, “ he’s alive to his family, but he’s deed to you an’ me, an’ mony yin besides. Yes, he’s deed t’ us among the bonnie streams an’ glens o’ the country, where I hae seen him the foremost at climin’ a hill, the best at a loup, an’ the handiest wi’ the tackle ;

the skeeliest, too, at working his fish, an' the safest at a landin', o' a' the clever cronies he had wi' him. An' as t' telling stories, an' makin' them on the spot, as I whiles thought, and killin' folks ootright wi' laughin', he was without a match."

"But, friend," observed the other, "I have heard you speak of several poets or authors with whom you occasionally had humorous bickerings and trials of wit, while the Professor used to be the umpire."

"That is true enough, and whiles I meet wi' some o' them yet; but nane o' them a' is like Christopher in onything—nane like him at a bit off-hand help, frae giein' a poor man a lift up wi' a lade on his back bee the roadside—and a bang lift he could gie—up to helpin' a needy writer t' keep his heed aboon the water, as I've heard said. Sometimes, Mr. Sherra," continued the honest fellow, sorrowfully, "when passing by, I look doon the haugh t' the Pyietweel"—a famous pool and stream in the Whitadder for a good fish

—“and I miss him, and his fine face bee its side. Indeed, I whiles think the troots themsels miss him, for they dinna appear, somehow, to loup sae blithely aboon the water as they used to do when he was lookin’ at them. I think really the poor pretty things ken’d him ; and maybe they did, for often after he catched them he couldna find the heart t’ kill them, an’ put them into the water again. I yince was inveetat t’ hear him lecture i’ the college, an’ it was grand t’ hear him, an’ the rogue’s eye soon picket ma tossy heed oot frae among the smooth-tappet lads i’ the room, an’ he sent a man to watch me when the discoorse was done, and made me gang in t’ see him, and hae a glass o’ wine. Now, I maun say again, Mr. Sherra, it’s a great loss t’ us that the business now to be done wasna twarie years sooner. But can ye no think o’ onybody yersel, besides me, that could gie us a bit help i’ the way o’ advice at least?”

“I have been thinking of having a private

word," answered the other, "with Robin Rawburn, who, like yourself, travels about a good deal, and knows a vast of folks, and some queer characters among them."

"Yes, doso, Mr. Sherra," said the other; "he's a very gude man for us, an verra obleegin' into the bargain. But is he at hame the now?"

"I think not; but I'll make it my business to learn this to-morrow."

"Ay, do; but drovers and coo-coupers, yeken, are aboot as hard t' find at hame as whaaps i' their nests. Yae week Robin is changin' his notes for raw-baned stirks, far away in Paddy-land, the next he's to be seen ayont the Borders, on the English-side, wi' a drove o' hairy kylie afore him an' a toosy doug at his heels."

Thus ended the deliberations for the night, and upon the following day the schoolmaster was fortunate enough to find Robin Rawburn at home, and to impart to him the purport of his visit. Though in no degree disposed to discourage the

worthy individual in his amiable and benevolent purpose, he was by no means so sanguine as his visitor with respect to the results of the publication, could even that be attained in the manner suggested ; nor could he conceive any practicable means through which he might be of service in the business. After a few minutes' reflection, however, he bethought himself of Lorance Langton, as a person not only competent to judge of the production, but capable of giving to the party the best of counsel on the subject, if not otherwise inclined to interpose his personal influence on the lady's behalf. Robin therefore mentioned his name and present residence, and suggested that Mr. Sherra should take an early opportunity of waiting upon him at the Creels, whom, as he said, he would find a most approachable and benevolent gentleman ; but he desired that no mention should be made of his name in the matter, lest it should be viewed in the light of a liberty on his part. This advice was promptly acted upon, and, in order to sustain his

courage in the enterprise, the worthy Dominie besought the company of his doughty friend and counsellor. Hence, as we have seen their visit to the Creels.

## CHAPTER II.

THE PARCEL—VERSES—AN HISTORICAL RELIC  
—OXFORD—BALLIOL COLLEGE—ORIGIN OF THE  
INSTITUTION OF LL.D.

THE earnest air of importance which accompanied the mission of the two strangers upon the delivery of the parcel into the hands of Lorange, for the purpose of submitting its contents to his censorship, though associated in his mind with a sense of the ridiculous, did not fail to draw his early attention to the subject. Accordingly, on the departure of the gentlemen, his curiosity being a

little awakened, he proceeded to remove the cover and take a glance through the interior. He was surprised at the amount of miscellaneous writings it contained. Splitting up the pile of MS. at different places, now reading a few lines, then passing onwards, his eyes chanced to alight upon a detached sheet, quaintly written in verse. As its perusal seemed to divert the censor, in the hope that it may also amuse, if not edify, our fair readers, we will here lay a copy of it before them, modernising the English to meet the times—

“CÆLEB’S PENIT.”

*A Bachelor’s Confession—so we shall render it.*

- “ In sombre mood I silent brood  
On years for ever gone ;  
Retracing back, my travelled track  
I sigh to look upon.
- “ At twenty-one I first began  
To float on fashion’s tide ;  
At beauty’s veil I struck my sail,  
Wher’ere my bark did glide.
- “ The stream was strong, I steered along,  
No time had I to tarry ;  
I laughed at those, as men of prose,  
Who left the ranks to marry. .



“ My youthful years left no arrears  
Of joys that could be caught ;  
Love’s gentle sighs and starry eyes  
Were all the heaven I sought.

“ Our maidens seem’d. I falsely deem’d,  
Mere love-inspiring muses ;  
But when they wed romance is fled—  
They change to fickle spouses.

“ When in the ‘ spoons,’ I counselled Rounes.  
‘ A wife,’ he said, ‘ would plague you.’  
His own, he thought, had brought him naught  
But costly bills and ague.

“ But, still unpledg’d, I never hedg’d,  
Tho’ wounded oft within ;  
I rode the race, love’s steeplechase,  
But never rode to *win*.

“ I took each leap, o’er flat and steep,  
As round the year did roll ;  
So fast the pace, that in the race  
I thought not of the goal.

“ Thus free and loose, with gold profuse,  
I sported youth away ;  
While in my prime I scorn’d the chyme  
That such would from me stray.

“ That ‘ wide-a-wake and no mistake,’  
That maxim of the fast ;  
That ‘ time-enough,’ of Snob and Muff,  
Hath ruined me at last.

“ Now pacing slow, at fifty-two,  
Too late, alas ! I find,  
Tho’ cash may flow like molten snow,  
It leaves a *chill* behind.

• “ The touch of gold at best is cold.  
In ripple or in calm,  
A woman’s hand at man’s command  
Feels *warmer* in the palm.

“ O. F.”

“ P S.—‘ He’s winter grey,’ the ladies say ;  
‘ Mamma, he’s far too old ;’  
Then what’s the good of *fog*hood  
Without its weight of gold ?”

“ Well,” said Lorange to himself, with a smile, after he had read over the lines, “ there is at least some sense in this penitential gentleman’s sentiments. And who may the unfortunate O. F. have been ? The initials represent a host of names I could mention, classical and otherwise.”

“ Yes,” whispers Pallas, “ and they also represent Old Fogie.”

He takes up another scrap.

“ Come,” he adds, “ this reads very much like

an advertisement for a wife. Nay, then, I much question whether the old gentleman had not been as much wag as penitent, after all."

We give the words as they stood—

"A BATCHELOR'S HEART TO BE LET."

"To be let upon lease, a desirable farm,  
One half now in fallow, the other old meadow,  
To be entered upon at the Michaelmas term,  
When the interest expires of an out-going widow,  
Who held it one year as tenant at will,  
Till served with ejectment for farming at ill.

"The homestead and fences are quite in repair;  
Where no one may enter to plunder or burn;  
And, treated with wisdom, affection and care,  
The soil will insure a most grateful return.  
An incoming tenant, with means at command,  
Will find it all sound and improvable land.

"The lease will extend to a ninety-years course,  
With power of renewal when same shall expire;  
And the tenant must take it for better for worse,  
As entered once thereon, she cannot retire.  
No offers accepted from widows encumbered,  
Or spinsters whose summers have forty out-numbered.

"Application to be made, &c., &c."

"Well," continued our censor, "there's a good

and sensible latitude here given to the spinsters. But woe be to the hard-hearted dog for his cruel treatment of the hapless widows. Yet I should like to have seen the fellow tried with a candidate in the form of a pretty young widow, with a pair of sweet prattlers in her hands, already got over the measles, with no doctors' and nurses' bills to be endorsed."

Our next and last extract from the heap is an article in prose, equally, we think, curious in its kind. It is entitled "An Historical Relic," and proceeds as follows :—

About the close of the twelfth century, when the kingdom of Scotland was convulsed by the civil wars, then fomented by the ambitious aims of Edward of England, and when the two rival lords of Annandale and Galloway—Bruce and Baliol—were contending for the Scottish crown, it happened that a noble youth and kinsman of the illustrious house of Douglas, named Belvany, fell into the hands of a company of English

troops, which had been despatched across the Borders in support of Baliol, and was thence carried off a prisoner and lodged in a small fort in Yorkshire. A large ransom was offered for his release, but neither money nor intercession could prevail with his captors. With the loss of his liberty he was also sternly denied all intercourse with his relations, the confessor and keeper of the fortlet alone having access to him.

Treated with such severity, his condition was deeply deplored by his kinsfolk and compatriots in Scotland; and to combat this hardship, various clandestine attempts had been made to establish communication with him. Letters and messages had been secretly conveyed to the castle, but, through the vigilance of the custodian, they had always been detected and the messenger chastised. Baffled in this manner for a time, an ingenious contrivance was at length had recourse to, at the instigation of a monk, aided by the wife of a yeoman, commonly called Luckie

Proudfoot, both of whom were warmly attached to the Douglas family. The monk, at an earlier period, had been employed by the family as tutor to the young nobleman, and had, with other branches of education, instructed him in what he termed a language of his own invention. This consisted of certain signs and characters after the fashion of short hand or hieroglyphics, the signification of which was known to the master and pupil only. Inscribed with the juice of a certain herb, these vehicles of intelligence could be imparted to the blade of a sword, a scabbard, or the tanned hide of an animal, and would remain invisible to the eye, until submitted to a secret process rendered available with a certain amount of light.

Now, how to communicate to the captive by means of this invention some intelligence of the state of the country, and the position of his party, had for some time occupied the mind of the zealous monk. To impart them to a sword or other weapon, with the view of forwarding the

same, appeared a vain endeavour, since his own must have been surrendered on his own capture. Missives on paper and parchment, and even linen, had been tried, but without success.

At this early and rude period of our history, woven cloth, and textures of that kind, were in much less general use than at the present day; and for man's clothing the skins of wild and domestic animals were more employed, and, even up to the present time, buckskin still forms an item in a gentleman's wardrobe. This, although already abundantly known, it has been thought proper here to premise; and it next remains to be stated that the monk in Scotland, and the chaplain of the fort, had in their youth received their education together, and had continued for some years afterwards on terms of friendly intimacy. The latter was of a sociable and witty turn, as ecclesiastics in those times often were. A renewal of this friendship, by correspondence, since the captivity of the young nobleman, had been again commenced between the reverend

brethren; and the social disposition of the chaplain had also ingratiated him with the custodian of the castle, and the two officials were in the habit of occasionally meeting to pass a pleasant hour together over a cup of good sack. It then happened upon one of these occasions, when they had indulged somewhat freely in their accustomed beverage, that the priest humorously twitted his companion on account of the decayed condition of his doublet and leather breeches, to which the other replied, that he hoped some day soon to have a renewal from the royal forest.

“You are a fortunate man,” said the confessor, “and, I trust in the meantime you will not forget that the prisoner’s wardrobe is in a still worse state.”

“In respect to that same,” returned the keeper, “them Highlanders when at ’ome, I fancy, eat their bucks, and make tambours o’ the hides, for I never seed one ’em in breeches i’ mi day. I ut the air be cool now, an’ the berth



ben't partic'lar warm, and mi gentleman's a brave cock; ben't sulky as some is, but pleasant t' talk to; and if it so be as he isn't ransomed, I wouldn't be i' the way o' some trifle t's comfort."

"Good," replied the priest; "that's spoken like a humane and sound churchman. But suppose you and I were to club together, and procure for him some small things in that way? *Non zelus sed charitas*, as we say—I think, after a time, we should not be forgotten. But no," checking himself, he ejaculated—"I have it. Dogs don't feed on dogs. I'll try the bounty of the parish."

The keeper having preferred the last proposition, and his temper thus sounded, a communication by the chaplain was speedily made to the monk in Scotland, which had the immediate effect of bringing the latter and his confederate, Luckie Proudfoot, into private counsel. Amongst the household possessions of the family of this trusty dame was a pair of stout buckskin

breeches, which, from the success that had always attended their wearer, her husband, in his enterprises—the Scotch have queer notions in this way—were called the “lucky leathers,” and the profits arising therefrom went by the name of *leather luck*; and in each pocket—after the fashion, as was supposed, of a nest egg—a small coin was constantly kept. Upon this article of dress the monk, not ignorant of its alleged virtue, had during the conference cast an occasional glance, as it hung tantalisingly on a hook before him. The design meditated was no sooner revealed, than the ingenious use of it was frankly consented to, which was, in effect, to try with it a leathern communication with the captive. Accordingly, a raven quill with the juice of a plant resembling dandelion was speedily brought into requisition, and, by this means, the monk with surprising celerity covered over nearly the entire surface, inside, of the buckskin garment, with the characters previously spoken of. This done, then how to get the strange epistle con-

veyed in safety across the Borders, which at this time, on both sides, were overrun with spies and rapacious marauders, was the next important question. A parcel, it was thought, under the arm of a stranger, was certain to attract the eye of some of these unscrupulous prowlers. It was therefore devised that a man, whom the vestment would fit, should be found, and mounted on horseback for the expedition, whereupon one Daniel Pouch, a tanner, was chosen.

After a circuitous journey, Pouch arrived, as directed, at a small hamlet, within the precincts of which stood the castle in question. Here he soon made his way to the chaplain, to whom he presented a letter from the monk, and by whom he was conducted into a chamber, where he stripped off the leather breeches, having his own supply underneath. On the following morning they were presented by the keeper to the prisoner, and by noon the latter was visited by his confessor, between whom, it was supposed, something more passed than a *pater noster*, and a

*voluntary* wound on the head of the custodian, for the pain of which he afterwards appeared to possess some *secret balm*. Within a few days more the same *epistle* recrossed the Borders, addressed to the abode of Luckie Proudfoot, having for its additional contents nothing less interesting than the noble limbs of the gallant Belvany. Upon the next day the buckskins were restored to their former hook within a sequestered vale in Annandale; but still greater grace awaited them.

By an eminent Scotch historian it is recorded that, when the heroic John Randolph and Archibald Douglas, fighting under the banners of Bruce, assembled a force in Annandale and suddenly attacked Baliol, who was then “feasting near Annan, they cut his guards in pieces, slew his brother, and chased him out of Scotland in such haste, that he escaped on horseback without time to clothe himself, or even to saddle his horse.” In relating this incident, the annalist would appear to have erred; for by a record discovered in a stone urn in Ercledon—famous for

its *Thomas*—it is stated that the fugitive in this emergency took shelter in the humble habitation of Luckie Proudfoot, who, though favourable to the opposite side, did not deny to the enemy in distress the right of asylum. That he entered her dwelling in a state of *dishabille* is admitted, but on his departure his lower proportions were comfortably covered by the afore mentioned leathern garment, which in the momentary confusion had been hastily lent to him. The imprudence of this act, however, immediately occurred to the housewife, and he was not allowed to remount his horse until he had pledged his word of honour for its return within a few days. This he failed to do, and his successful escape into England was ascribed by honest Luckie, less to his own personal address or ingenuity, than to the virtue of this portion of his clothing; and it was not until he had reached the town of Oxford, on his way to the court of Edward, that he once removed the leather breeches from his body.

Sadly *saddle sore* and forlorn, his wandering lordship arrived at Oxford, and was conducted to a wealthy monastery, where he was hospitably received by the prior, and clothed in a fashion more in conformity with his rank. From an incident, unluckily for Mrs. Froudfoot, the reputed virtue of the leather breeches shortly reached the ears of the reverend brotherhood, who at once bethought themselves of the Trojan *pal-ladium*, and proposed to their guest that it should be retained within the walls of the establishment. Baliol, touched with the superstition of the time, manifested a reluctance to accede to the unexpected proposal, conceiving that his own broken fortunes might yet require the benefit of the lucky garment. An accommodation, however, was ultimately agreed upon, in which it was stipulated between the parties that, except called upon by extreme emergency, it should remain in the possession of the pious brethren.

Oxford, at this period, could boast rather of a sumptuous *refectory* than a school for public in-

struction ; but from that date its mental element received a miraculous impetus, and since the fortuitous event it has progressed through century after century until it has become, as a seat of science and learning, the most renowned in Christendom ; numbering, at the present day, no less than twenty famous colleges. The leathern property not having been demanded, upon the death of Baliol (otherwise written Balliol) it was bequeathed with a large sum of gold to the monastery, with the following provisions :—

Firstly, that a public school or college shall be erected of sound and imperishable stone (it is to be regretted this clause was not duly executed) and dedicated to his memory ; under the foundation stone of which the leather breeches, containing one plack (a Scotch coin) in each pocket, shall be interred for its *safety* and *prosperity*. Secondly, that a statue of marble (shocking to say, it is in sandstone) be executed by a “cunning artist,” and placed thereon, in an erect

posture, with the face directed northwise, in token, as is supposed, of gratitude to the habitation of Luckie Proudfoot. Thirdly, that in the said college a Degree shall thereafter be instituted, conferrable only upon scholars of distinguished attainments, to be entitled the *Leather Luck Degree* (commonly abbreviated *LL.D.*), thereby implying that the possessor thereof shall in all his enterprises of life have *leather luck*. Since the institution in Balliol, other colleges *have* copied the example, but in these the successful candidates for the honour have rarely achieved the same amount of luck in the world, or celebrity for occult lore.

How curious it appears, in travelling back through the dim and hoary centuries of the past, to note in their quaint annals the trivial incidents which have given origin and perpetuity to some of the most substantial achievements in modern record. The history of England furnishes abundant examples in this respect. For the foundation and stability of two of her noblest



ed institutions she is indebted to simple incidents of this kind; and her ancient aliens, north of the Tweed, are not without their claim to a share of these honours. To the throne of Westminster, Scotland supplied that foundation stone which had given sovereignty to her Gaelic lords—the stone at Scone, on which they had received the Scottish crown. To the University of Oxford she gave—but wherefore repeat her bounty here? —their grateful fruits are sufficient for us. The several waters of the Tweed are no longer at enmity with each other. The sword and the dirk no longer flash in hostile ranks on her blooming banks, but now, happily for both, lie sheathed in amity and bound together, side by side, in a loving wreath of the rose and thistle, in the true bonds of *Border wedlock*. Nor to us, the descendants of these ancient aliens, can it be found unprofitable to moralise over these historical memorials. By these deeds of grace Scotland is none the poorer. For her obligations England has not proved ungrateful. Nay, even up to the

time we live in, the fairest and noblest monarch that ever couched over that illustrious stone—VICTORIA REGINA—performs her annual pilgrimage to its northern shrine. Nor, with this royal example, have her Saxon subjects—and, properly, foremost amongst these the academical disciples of the Isis—been unmindful in their dutiful acknowledgments. Upon each recurring year, ere yet the May fly has tried her wings above the curling waters of the Teith and Tay, or the “mountain plant” has shed its purple blossom on the “heath-cock heights of Uam-var,” the Saxon purses are to be seen scattering their golden treasures throughout her romantic vales; whilst in the tangled wake of these generous sons, the Anglican maidens, rich in grace and southern smiles, are to be observed practising, with roguish sweetness, their mellowing influence upon the sterner brow of the hardy Highlander.

## CHAPTER III.

## LORANCE LANGTON GOES OUT TO DINNER.

THREE days had duly passed over when the learned schoolmaster of Kettlenaket, dressed in his best suit of black, swallow-tailed coat, stiff white neckcloth, and high shirt collar, turned his footsteps towards the Creels, ruminating as he went upon the chances for and against the success of his literary enterprise. Arriving at the door of the inn, he applied his knuckles to the unpainted boards of that fabric.

“The gentleman’s no at hame the day, Mr.

Sherra," said Nelly, in answer to the knock, "but he's left a letter for you. Just wait a minute till I fetch it."

"Not a good omen to begin with," thought the sanguine Domine. "Fashionable folk often lacketh the moral courage of school-boys, to honestly say yes or no to one's face, and must needs have recourse to evasions and shifts to——"

"Here it is, Mr. Sherra," added the maid, as she passed the note into his hands. The seal was speedily broken, and the focus of the spectacles as quickly adjusted. He perused and reperused the contents with earnest application; carefully weighing and examining each word and line, in order to evoke, if possible, therefrom some scintillation of hope for his cause. The contents were brief, and ran as follows:

"SIR,

"I much regret that my absence at my temporary home on this evening will deprive me

of the opportunity of expressing to you, as solicited, my opinion of the matter confided to me. But if you will name, verbally or otherwise, upon what other early day it would be convenient to again call, I will endeavour to meet you and give you the benefit of any suggestion I can offer on the subject.

“I am, &c.,

“L. LANGTON.”

“Well,” observed the recipient to himself, when he had concluded the second reading, “there is nothing discouraging here. No; then, according to the doctrine of ethics, where there is no absolute discouragement, there is *encouragement*. Yes, there must be; yes—ay, and the gentleman writes a good bold hand, too—something in that—yes, candour. No shuffling, equivocating man ever wrote an honest hand—

‘A crabbed hand, a crookèd mind,  
For rogues, the gods of old designed.’

But he does not point his i’s, or strokes his t’s—

sometimes he strokes his l's instead, and makes his o's like a's and a's like o's—all the neglect of early teaching. Yes, there is encouragement;" whereupon the soliloquist folded up the small epistle, and struck out into a sharp walk.

In his sable evening dress, silk stockings, and a pair of light pumps, barely covering his toes, tied with black ribbon, and seated comfortably in an easy and roomy carriage, drawn by a pair of shining bay horses, Lorange Langton is now posting onward to the hospitable mansion of Captain Eyecastle. The equipage is the property of that gentleman, who, probably owing to the dearth of chaises in the locality, in desiring the pleasure of our hero's company to dinner, made it a condition that his carriage should be employed for conveyance.

"Mr. Langton, I am very happy to see you at my house," said the host, stretching out his hand, as he met his guest upon the outer steps at the door of the Castle. Mark (to his footman), bear Mr. Langton's bag upstairs to his

room, and (turning to Lorance) let me, sir, conduct you thither."

The visitor obeyed, and was thus escorted to a spacious bed-room, in which stood an elaborately-carved antique wardrobe of the Elizabethan era. Descending shortly to the hall, he was next ushered into the drawing-room, where at the door he was again received by the host, and presented to Mrs. Eyecastle. Besides the family, there were present several other guests for the evening, together with a matron lady, her daughter and niece, who were staying at the Castle on a visit of some duration, and were from a more northerly region of Scotland.

"How is Mr. Langton?" said a gentleman, sliding up with the air of a privileged guest to the side of the Captain and his lady, while in conversation with our hero. He had been addressing a lady, seated on a sofa, with his back directed towards the door, and had not been recognised by the last comer on his entrance. The intruder was no other than Mr. Goodhead, the advocate,

whose acquaintance, under somewhat different circumstances, the reader has already made. Lorange, not without a slight flush on his countenance, expressed his pleasure in meeting the gentleman. This incidental meeting of the judge, the advocate, and "offender" was, amongst themselves, the subject here of some private pleasantries.

The advocate was dressed in a shining suit which even the raven might have envied; black silk neckcloth, black satin vest, and a frilled shirt, in faultless plaits. His hair, tinged with gray, was smoothly brushed upwards by his ears, overtopping a slight baldness in front, which showed to advantage a fine forehead: from his waistband in front, depended a double gold watch-chain, whereunto were attached two antique seals. There was a tranquil expression about his luminous blue eyes which seemed to harmonise with the calmness of his features.

Lorange, with Mrs. Eyecastle on his arm, led into the dining-room, and took his place on her



right; while Mr. Goodhead, with one of the young ladies sojourning in the house, sat upon her left. The dinner partook of that plain sumptuousness which characterises the board of a country gentleman of affluent means and taste. The grouse season had just commenced, and the Captain's gun and moors had contributed thereto a quota of this famous game, and the wines were worthy the hospitality of the master. When the ladies had withdrawn, the conversation of the gentlemen turned upon politics. The country was on the eve of a general election; but being unacquainted with the political bearings of the county, Lorance, though sympathising with the tone of the house, took no part in the matter. In their reference to local topics, not even the most distant allusion was made to the affair in which he had so lately been a prominent actor. When the gentlemen had returned to the drawing-room they found a young lady seated at the piano, and turning over the leaves of a book of music.

“Mr. Langton,” said Mrs. Eyecastle, “by your long absence from your native country, and the habit of listening to foreign music, I fear you will have lost all relish for our Scottish airs. But Miss Huntly, who has lived some years on the Continent, can supply us with both French and Italian, which, I presume you are now more used to.”

“The poet, madame,” returned Lorance, “says that absence makes the heart grow fonder, and I know of nothing, save affectionate friends, to which the words can be more aptly applied than to one’s own national music, from which neither distance nor time can alienate the true lover; and whenever honoured with the choice, I invariably cast in my vote for the Scotch airs.”

“Is there any song more than another that you prefer? Perhaps we could compass so much as to gratify you. Most gentlemen have their favourite airs,” she continued, “and we ladies, owing to vast cleverness in such matters, profess

to divine their qualities from the choice they make in music."

"Your confession to so much, madam, were of itself sufficient to daunt the courage of the boldest of knights where a preference remained. For my part, none here can come unacceptable to me; and though indifferently endowed in the divination of ladies' minds by their music, I hold at all times their taste to be paramount."

"Mr. Langton," replied the lady, smiling, "doubtless I must yield the palm to one who has studied gallantry in the courts of the great Rajahs of India."

With this, Mrs. Eyecastle moved towards the instrument. Several airs, accompanied by the voice, were now laudably executed, the clever advocate to two of which essaying a successful bass. In listening, which he always did to good music with marked attention, Langton's eyes chanced to alight upon the face of a young lady, then seated at a little distance from the performers, who at that moment seemed to be re-

garding his features with extreme interest. Glances challenged glances until their eyes met, and continued for some seconds so intensely fascinated by one another as to have lost all power of volition. At length, as if checked or startled by a sudden impulse, the lady's turned away, and never again throughout the evening met those of the stranger. His thoughts at once became a little perplexed, and he taxed and retaxed his memory in order to discover whether at any time he had ever seen the same features before. He fancied he had, and he also fancied that, on the part of the lady, there was a faint or uncertain recognition of himself. Between them there had passed no formal introduction, and he had not learned her name. This simple incident, however, awakened in his mind a whole train of bewildering memories; and it was only when the fair cause of the perplexity was requested to proceed to the piano that he recalled himself to a sense of his position.

“Come, Grizell,” said the lady of the house,

“you must now let us have one or two airs of your nice selection, and perhaps Mr. Langton will name some favourite which he has not yet heard.”

Lorance protested his inability to make a choice, and promptly sought escape from further importunity by asking of the young lady the favour to choose one for him. The favour was accorded: and immediately the lady's hands were on the ivory keys. Curiously, as was then thought, the choice fell upon “Auld Lang Syne,” and never had Lorance listened to this universal favourite with a keener sensibility. In the performance, the music was held quite subordinate to the words; and their genuine pathos and touching sentiment seemed to fall upon his ears with inexpressible tenderness. Her voice was of the minor capacity, but flowing, silvery, and mellifluous as a heather-bell; and when she uttered these words—

“ We twa hae ran about the braes,  
And pu'd the gowans fine;  
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot  
Sin auld lang syne,”

he thought she imparted to them something more than the ordinary emphasis. Still, if such were the case, he was not egotist enough to suppose that it could have any particular reference to him, as the sentiment was equally applicable to every one who has spent a few years of childhood in the country. Nevertheless, probably from a resemblance the singer's features bore to those of a young lady to whom he had been warmly attached, but had died several years since, a notion continued to haunt his mind which he could not discard. When the song was ended, Captain Eyecastle glided up to the side of his guest—

“Mr. Langton,” he said, “I am glad to perceive your appreciation still of our Scotch airs.”

“My passion for music,” replied the other, “I account among my numerous weaknesses; and that song, the higher, I think, we clamber up the hill of time, transports us the more readily back to the land of dreams and early flowers we left in the rosy vale of childhood below. The lady, I think, has sung it with exquisite taste

and tenderness, and is, moreover, sufficiently skilled in vocal 'gramarye' to send her listeners abroad, like so many children, to pluck daisies and paddle in burns whensoever she so wills it."

"Miss Keith is most accomplished in music, and sings always with the perfection of taste and feeling."

"Mentioning the lady's name reminds me," said Langton, "of an esteemed friend, Captain Keith, of the —th Highlanders, who died a few years ago in India, and whose loss to the service, and especially to his regiment, was deeply lamented. For some years we had been like brothers, and I had the painful satisfaction of being with him up to his last hours of life."

"He was the cousin of this lady."

"Indeed!" added the guest, with suppressed emotion.

"And a younger brother of your deceased friend," continued the Captain, "succeeded, through the law of entail, to the family estates of the young lady, she having no surviving brother

at the death of her late father ; but she is well provided for. She had an only sister, to whom she was devotedly attached ; but the sister died shortly after her marriage some years ago.”

Their further conversation was now precluded by the rising of some of the guests to take their departure—the distance from their homes requiring an early move.

In conformity with a hospitable custom of the Castle (as observable in other mansions in remote districts), an invitation to dinner frequently implied also an invitation to the morrow’s breakfast, a bed being included—*i.e.*, so far as it extended to guests residing at an inconvenient distance. It had, therefore, been arranged by the generous host that our hero should spend the night, and be at liberty to return home at pleasure on the following day. Accordingly, when the ladies retired for the night, the Captain, the advocate, and Langton, repaired to the billiard room for the temperate indulgence of a cigar. Here the privacy of the place allowed a freer



scope for conversation, and, amongst other topics, the recent case of "babbie stealing" was humorously introduced and reviewed with considerable merriment. On the subject, the magistrate observed that at one stage of the proceedings in court, he had an apprehension that he should be compelled, by force of circumstances, to furnish his guest with an escort, at the public expense, to a different castle than that in which he now sat ; although he felt a conviction, the moment the alleged " kidnapper " presented himself therein, that a mistaken identity, or some other blunder, had been committed. Still, for a time he feared that, in his official capacity, he could not help himself. Lorance, however, declared that he would not have lost that incident in his life (meaning what had passed) for the sum of five hundred pounds ; humorously observing that, for times to come, it would be worth more money to him as a joke with his friends. Amongst the minor actors, the doughty yeoman, Robin Rawburn, was commendably spoken of, and the cannie

webster of Shuttlebraes, with his clever management of the untoward Stotts, was not overlooked. To Mr. Goodhead Robin had been creditably known for some years ; nor, prior to his appearance in court, had he been altogether unknown by sight to the Captain ; but upon the bench the magistrate did not deem it incumbent upon him to evince there a recognition.

In his mornings, from habit, Lorance was what is commonly termed an early man, though, paradoxically, a late one at night. By the hour of seven he was up and stirring in his room, and at eight he had completed his toilet, and was out surveying the grounds and shrubs in the vicinity of the Castle—

Where crystal drops, by midnight born,  
Hung graceful on the dewy thorn ;  
And eglantine, in tresses fair,  
Lent sweetness to the morning air.

Eager he sought the parterre round—  
Love's plant its early bloom had shed—  
He spied it bending on the ground ;  
The stem was left, the rose was fled.

His sleep had been somewhat fitful and broken ;

but his countenance, favoured by the exhilarating air of the morning, soon recovered its usual freshness. There was a good rally among the ladies at the breakfast table. Mrs. Eyecastle was pleasing, prepossessing, and amiable; and her matronly friend, Mrs. Huntley, though more formal and grave, was conversable, and even-jocular with the advocate. Her daughter looked blithe and lively; but the eyes of Miss Keith, despite her efforts at concealment, betokened indifferent rest.

When the morning meal was over, Captain Eyecastle led his guest towards the stables to inspect his stud, which included some good hunters and clever cobs. Here, also, he shewed some handsome sporting dogs and terriers, which he appeared to prize alike for their excellence, beauty, and the purity of their breed. He next conducted him over the adjoining grounds of the Castle, which were abundantly furnished with old ornamental timber. A fine stream bounded the park on one side, and murmured imposingly

through the overhanging foliage. Lorange had consented to stay lunch, and as some magisterial business required for a time the attention of his host, he was requested to give, in the interval, his company to the ladies.

A walk in the park was proposed, and three of the ladies, accompanied by the advocate, escorted him through some of the romantic scenery it contained. From this expedition Miss Keith had excused herself on the ground of letter-writing, but promised to join the party before their return. Completing her task, she accordingly set out for this purpose ; but, as frequently happens under similar circumstances, she chanced to proceed in the wrong direction, forgetting that her friends would return from an opposite point to that by which they had left. On their return to the Hall the party was then apprised, by a servant, of the lady's mistake, and immediately the two gentlemen were despatched by separate routes to overtake her and accompany her home. Following the common course round the park,

they at length met without having seen the object of their search, whereupon they came to the conclusion that she must have made her way back by some private pass across the grounds. But, on reconsideration, lest this should not have been the case, and the lady had sat down to rest on some of the secluded seats, it was arranged that Mr. Goodhead, who was none of the most ambitious of pedestrians, should leisurely advance to an elevated and open situation, from which he could command a distinct view of any moving figure within a considerable distance from where he stood ; while the other was to proceed with a closer inspection, diverging wheresoever he deemed it desirable, over that ground which the advocate had just passed. On his previous walk in company with the ladies, with his keen eye for the picturesque, Lorange had chanced to espy, through an opening in the wood, a small recess or alcove in the steep bank overlooking the stream, which was partially screened from ordinary view by a portion of underwood. This, he

thought at the time, would make an admirable seat for persons prone to sentimentality; and as it lay not much out of his present course, though the approach seemed steep and uninviting, he resolved to have a passing glance into the interior for his own gratification. Accordingly, on coming opposite to the bank, he commenced picking his way downwards in order to reach an entrance. His footsteps in doing so among the crackling twigs made a considerable noise, and as he approached he distinctly heard a rustling sound among the leaves within it. A moment more and Miss Keith stood speechless and motionless before him; and such was his surprise, the unexpectedness of the meeting, or, it might be, the strangeness of the scene, that for some seconds he remained gazing on her form, as mute and motionless as herself. In her appearance there was nothing stern or tragical. She looked the impersonation of innocence, heroical in her gentleness—a naiad, startled from her sleep in her cave of moss. But with Lorance

this state was only momentary, and recovering himself, or at least repressing all outward signs of emotion, he addressed her in his usual mild and unembarrassed manner.

“Miss Keith,” he said, raising his hat, “I beg a thousand pardons for my seeming awkwardness, caused by my unexpected trespass upon you in your private retreat. But the apology I have to offer for the intrusion, is, that I have been desired by Mrs. Eyecastle, who this morning missed you on her walk, to endeavour to overtake or find you in the park, and to place at your acceptance my company homeward.”

To this address, strange to say, the lady made no reply, but continued mute and immovable as a statue, while Langton looked wonderingly on, again in a state of bewilderment. To retreat at such a moment he felt impossible and inhuman ; to advance were to cross that line of reserve which their slight acquaintance disallowed. At length she shook her head faintly ; her lips closed, her

eyelids moved, the crimson flush upon her cheek occasioned by the surprise was passing away, while her figure began insensibly to waver—he sprung forward, and only saved her from sinking with force upon the ground. She swooned away, and he loosened the ties of her bonnet, rested her head upon the ground, placing some dried leaves under it, and hastened to the stream, drenched his handkerchief with the running water, then, returning, wrung it over her temples. Laying his hand upon her wrist, he felt the pulsation faintly in motion. The momentum gradually increased, and soon signs of recovery became more visible, when, in a low voice, she asked for a little water. To supply this was to her attendant a momentary perplexity. But he was a man of prompt expedients, and casting his eyes upon a book lying by her side, he snatched it up, tore out a blank leaf, converted it into a cup, returned to the stream, and speedily held water to her lips. By assistance she now assumed a sitting posture, and looked strangely and vacantly around her,



while he, supporting her with his arms, spoke kindly and encouragingly to her. For a brief space she continued in this position, but made no effort to speak ; then, bending her head forward, she burst into tears.

“ Forgive me, forgive me, sir,” she articulated, “ I’ll be better soon.” These words she uttered amidst deep and convulsive throbs. The sluices of the mind being thus freely opened—the unerring means of assuaging the pangs of pent up suffering—Lorance knew that relief would soon follow ; and drawing himself up, he now stood by her side profoundly affected ; nor did he press words upon her, reserving speech till it would be better timed. For a time, therefore, she was allowed to remain in her tears uninterruptedly. At length he broke the painful silence by proffering some further attention, to which she replied—

“ Thank you, sir ; thank you, s-i-r ; but ; oh ! that word sticks in my throat. O ! Lorance—once my familiar Lorry—my dear, dear adopted brother Lorry, do you not know me ? Do you

not remember your promise once to be my brother, because my sis-sis-ter (her sobs checking her) and I had no brother of our own? And now when she is—is gone, and I have no one left familiar to my childhood, have you become estranged, lost to me, too? Do you not know your little sister Grizzy, whose childish head you have so often decked with garlands of daisies in woods like this?”

Had not the eyes of the listener been averted from the speaker during this moving and child-like appeal, she would then have realised proofs vastly more convincing of his recognition and remembrance of her than any tongue could express. The intensity of feeling with which he silently listened to it, twanging word after word into his heart, well nigh overcame him ; but dashing the tear from his eyes, and again feeling himself master of the occasion, he turned round, and clasping her small hand in his, pressed it tenderly, imprinting at the moment his lips upon her brow.

“And am I again,” he said, “permitted to call you my cherished sister? my laughing, sunny-haired sister Grizzy of former days, whose vision, crowned with the wild flowers of her own gathering—ay, and after I had ‘wandered mony a weary foot’ in distant lands—has so often recurred to and dwelt on my mind; and, for your satisfaction, let me confess it, was even so late as last night present in my dreams. To me, after so many years of absence, this is an occasion of happiness which I dared not calculate or presume upon. But now, claiming and redeeming our early pledges, I feel increased in joy and wealth by the restoration of so faithful and loving a sister.”

“Oh! Lorance, how have I longed and prayed for this hour, painful though its coming has been to me! For ten years past and gone—since the death of my dear and loving sister—have I wearied my heart, by night and day, with hopes and dreams of once more seeing you, to deliver her last words and blessing to you. But alas!”—

here she shook her head, and again wept, the words dying on her lips —“when you have come back I have not strength to utter them.”

“Not now, my gentle Grizell,” interposed Lorance; “you shall have more befitting and ample opportunities, I trust, of discharging that duty.”

“Oh! Lorance,” she added, “could you only know the heavy load of pain and suffering your words and gladdening voice have this day removed from my heart—rendered the more wretched since last night, when you did not seem to know me—you would forgive me for the sorrow and trouble I have caused to you here.”

“The sorrow that I have experienced has been in sympathy for your suffering, and, by the gladdening words you have spoken to me, I am more than compensated by a thousand fold. The only regret I can have,” he continued, “is that an occasion less painful to you for our revelation had not been afforded us. But now,” he added, changing his tone, “since you have made good

your former claim of me, I must in turn assert a brother's right to exercise my advice and cares upon you. Let me, therefore, inaugurate my new powers by two salutary enactments. The first is, that there be an end to your tears and unavailing sorrow. Belonging to the school of laughing thinkers, I cannot have a melancholy sister. Where you have shed your crystal drops, daisies and violets must spring up ; where clouds have rested, sunshine must prevail. The next is, that you will be as good as you have been faithful to your unworthy brother, and in testimony thereof, will permit him to conduct you home as speedily as possible."

To these injunctions, so far as came within the pale of possibility, her ready acquiescence was accorded ; and after effecting some slight adjustments in her apparel and disarranged tresses (in order to pass muster before her friends at the Castle), she accepted the support of her "brother's" arm, and the two ascended the bank, when, again assuming "open order," they proceeded leisurely

homeward. In their conversation, it was desired by Lorance that, as he could not have any secrets or acts of privacy with any members of the household belonging to a family by whom he had been received a welcome and honoured guest, Miss Keith should choose an early opportunity for explaining to Mrs. Eyecastle the accidental discovery of their former relations of friendship and intimacy, which would enable him, as he said, to claim a brother's privilege to receive intelligence of her health and happiness whenever she was pleased to communicate. Their private conversation now ended; and it was fortunate for the lady's return that they were here joined by Mr. Goodhead, before they had come into view of the windows.

## CHAPTER IV.

LORANCE TAKES HIS LEAVE—RECEIVES VISITORS  
AT THE CREELS.

LUNCH, in hot dishes, was spread at one o'clock, and Mrs. Eyecastle, with the rest of the walking party, appeared none the worse for their morning exercise. Miss Keith looked more cheerful than on the former occasion at table, and though more composed in mind, her face was pale, and bore visible traces of her recent suffering.

Lorance partook but sparingly of the repast,

but kept up a lively conversation with the ladies. He then rose to take his departure, but declined, as proffered, the family carriage, preferring a two-wheeled vehicle. When he was about to take the hand of Mrs. Eyecastle, the lady humorously said,

“ Mr. Langton, your short visit to the Castle has afforded us all much pleasure, and as I take an interest in the welfare of all my fellow-creatures, and especially in agreeable, adventurous knights riding alone among our wild hills, beset with many perils, I cannot in justice to myself permit you to depart without warning you of one danger in particular to which you are about to be exposed. By the tantalising account you have given us of your charming and sagacious dove, you have unwittingly awakened such an interest in it with my family, that a formidable raid has since been meditated upon your lonely abode; not, however, to carry devastation or spoil, but simply to obtain a sight of the pretty little creature. Of course, as our party will consist of



ladies, we shall call around us an escort of good knights, which will save your character in the eyes of our Kirk. For, indeed, as some of our king's loyal and gallant subjects" (here casting a playful glance on the face of the Captain) "can well inform you, the character and deportment of a stranger in these rude parts are sometimes exposed to a rather unceremonious scrutiny."

"Hear, hear," ejaculated the magistrate, exchanging a smile with Langton, which was echoed with applause and a hearty laugh from the advocate.

"Mr. Langton," interjoined the Captain, laughing, "I have never before heard my wife make so long a speech—not that I now mean to commit the anomaly of complaining of a spouse's silence. But in listening to it, sir, it occurred to me, that should you chance in your sojourn to fall into any of those troubles or rude handlings to which she alludes, and you become in need of a pleader at some of our local tribunals, you could not do better than retain her for your counsel; for I dare

assure you, she would carry her cause against the adverse wits of a whole bench of magistrates."

These remarks were followed by a renewal of laughter, and amidst the merriment Lorance said,

"I cannot, Mrs. Eyecastle, sufficiently express to you my sense of gratitude, not only for the compliment you have paid to me, but for the timely warning you have so honourably conveyed of the meditated descent upon my frail fortlet in the valley. And, madam, such being the design, you will perhaps forgive me if I now crave the further extension of your generosity, to previously apprise me of the day fixed upon for the enterprise, so as to insure my presence on the occasion to see to my sentries, and command in person the defence. With respect to the other numerous dangers to which the stranger is exposed among these wild lands, and for which, on my behalf, you have kindly expressed some concern, allow me, in return, to tender to you my full appreciation of your sentiments, and my firm conviction

of their reality. Already my slight experience has taught me the value of such friendly hints, and the necessity there is of conducting my movements with the utmost caution and circumspection. But, in truth, madam, I feel at a loss to understand what line of tactics it were best to pursue; for, as with the hero of old, I verily believe I am wandering under some spell of enchantment; and unless, like a true knight errant, I call to my side the service of some trusty squire, armed with rods of the roan tree, I know not how I am to continue scathless. Strange and unexampled incidents seem to beset my path at almost every turn. Yet, such seems to be the waywardness of my star, and the capricious temper of my enchantress, that often after leading me into quagmires, and surrounding me with perplexities, she again returns to the rescue, and over them throws such a charming veil of romance, and betimes appends to them such happy sequences, that—and such is my infatuation—I protest to you, instead of repining at my lot, I could

gladly continue under her sway for the rest of my days."

He now took hearty leave of his new and happy friends, and proceeded leisurely homewards.

On the evening of the second day following his return from his visit, Lorance had a lengthened conference with the worthy schoolmaster of Kettlenaket. At the interview he declined, as he said, without prejudice to the matter, to pass a premature judgment upon the literary merits of the papers confided to him. But, in expressing a due sense of the compliment thereby conferred, he assured Mr. Sherra, not only of the deep interest he felt in the project contemplated on the lady's behalf, but of his desire, in the event of no better means offering, to use any influence he possessed with a publishing house in London, with which he had some acquaintance, for the attainment of her object. But, in promising this much, he thought it proper to remind the gentleman of the great uncertainty that must always

attend even the most laudable aspirations in matters of literature. With respect to the MS. itself, he left it to the option of the gentleman to receive it again into his own possession, until a communication should be made on the subject, or to leave it with him to be taken to London upon his return to the capital, which he intended shortly to effect. The latter alternative being preferred, he now took from his pocket book a bank note of some value, and, passing it to his auditor, desired him to present it to the lady as the first instalment of the price of the copyright. At this unexpected result of their interview, even the sanguine hopes of the dominie were startled into amazement. His eyes sparkled in their sockets; his hand trembled, and his mind seemed to question its reality; and in this state, making a most profound bow, he withdrew.

“I thought as much,” said he, in a state of mental elation, to himself, as the earth was flying behind his long strides on his way homeward—  
“I thought as much when I saw his handwriting.

I am never deceived in that with any man or wo—. As to woman," suddenly checking himself, "I might as well hope to tell the colour of a hen by its scratches on the dust heap as to read her mind on paper. To me her letter is a tablet of sand, obscured and varied by every tide that washes over it."

Indulging, through the gleefulness of his bosom, in ejaculations of this ungallant and extravagant kind, he speedily disappeared in the distance.

Early on the following day, from a note he had received, Mr. Langton took an opportunity of apprising his hostess that he expected, some time in the afternoon, a passing call from the ladies of the Castle, for the purpose of having a sight of his dove. This intimation he thought desirable, so as to insure the head of the household against being taken at a disadvantage. About the hour of three, accordingly, an open carriage drew up at the door containing Mrs. Eyecastle, and Miss Huntly, *vis-à-vis*ed by Mr.

Goodhead and Miss Keith. They were escorted on horseback by Captain Eyecastle, a younger brother, and a fine boy, mounted on a pony. The ladies were appareled in the top of summer fashion. Miss Keith wore a sky-blue silk dress, a bonnet to match, trimmed with pink ribbons and violet flowers (symbols of fidelity), and looked blithe and killing; while the advocate, doing his best in retaliation, had gone to the inordinate length of unpacking a pair of his best lavender gloves for the occasion.

The arrival had no sooner been announced than Lorange hastened to the side of the carriage. In the morning of this day he had bestowed some extra attention upon his toilet, and he now wore in his cravat a fine oriental pin of great value—the gift of Rajah Rundheer Singh, which he had received from his Highness in acknowledgment of some distinguished feat at a hunting and hawking party on the plains of Kuppoortulla. He received the ladies from their seats, and taking Mrs. Eyecastle on his arm, conducted

them to his small sitting room, which, for the occasion, had likewise undergone some additional embellishment at the hands of the good mistress of the inn. In a corner, upon an elevated perch, sat the interesting bird. Upon the entrance of the strangers she exhibited some slight signs of uneasiness, but a few words from her owner soon restored her to confidence. She was now requested to bow a welcome to her visitors, which she accomplished by a succession of most graceful movements, bending her head downwards and raising her train alternately, accompanying these motions with a singularly pleasing expression and subdued tones. Lorange next asked her to show the ladies what the gentlemen did to move the hearts of their sweethearts, accompanying this request by a low whistle—the whistle evidently being the signal for a change of note—and she immediately leant forward her head, inflated her bosom, and commenced cooing in the same manner of those commonly heard in our woods and forests. This afforded much merriment to



the ladies, as also to the gentlemen, although the latter acknowledged the mirth to be cruelly at their expense. Her docility and affection shown to her owner, thus rendering her a pleasing companion in retirement, together with the grace and elegance of all her attitudes, in repose or otherwise, elicited the surprise and admiration of her visitors. As the grown-up members of the party were doubtless privately acquainted with the history of the bird, they here delicately abstained from any remark upon that point. But the young gentleman, who appeared not so well up in his information, could not forego a natural question or two on this head, which somewhat shook the propriety of the elders.

“Mr. Langton,” he inquired, with the innocence and curiosity of his age, “are there any more doves to be got where you had that from?”

“No, my little friend, that’s the last of the season,” answered our hero, promptly, with a slight blush and suppressed laugh.

“But, Mr. Langton,” continued the young questioner, “where did you get your bird from?”

“Mr. Langton *found it on the road*, child,” ejaculated the Captain, flying to the rescue, with an attempt at gravity; but the question and answer were too much for the company, and Langton was the first to break down. A general burst of laughter was the consequence, in which all seemed to readily join, save only the boy, who appeared to look as if he thought them all very silly for laughing at so simple a thing.

Taking leave of the bird, the ladies were met by the landlady, who proposed shewing to them her best rooms, in the ordering of which she took considerable pride; whilst Nelly—blushing Nelly, covered with gingham and dimples—was whisking about the doors and passages, with an apparent consciousness that she was expected to shew herself to the high company, and that to the best possible advantage. Nor was the comely lass ordained to be overlooked. With playful

humour, doubtless sympathising with her innocent pride, the advocate, in sauntering along, took an opportunity of complimenting her with a few words. He admired, he said, the romantic situation and cosy appearance of the house, and jocularly went to the length of expressing an approval even of the maiden's taste in the selection of her own personal appointments, taking exception, however, as he professed, to a pink ribbon she wore round her neck, which, he assured her, should be blue, and dropped into her hand a silver piece to procure a substitute. But it was so fated that the learned gentleman was not to have the game here all to himself; for in the younger bachelor, Mr. Norvel, he found a formidable rival, who protested that pink was the proper colour, only the ribbon was too narrow, and immediately covered the coin with a larger piece, in order that one of unexceptionable width should be obtained. Nelly was now left almost beside herself; but to her mistress afterwards she declared that the "wee manie wi' the wee

hattie" made the deepest impression—the latter gentleman belonging to the smaller standard of the hardier sex.

The party, apparently much gratified by their visit to the Creels, now taking a cordial leave of our hero, re-seated themselves and took their departure.

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## CHAPTER V.

## AN ANGLING EXPEDITION.

DURING the intervals between the various events related in our preceding pages, Lorance Langton lost no opportunity of advancing his inquiries respecting the object which had brought him into the Lammermoors—namely, the discovery of John Langton's descendants. He had examined sundry parish registers, taxed the knowledge of most of the old inhabitants of the district, and had employed others to prosecute the search on

his behalf, but as yet no practicable clue had been discovered. In the books of the parish to which K——ws belonged, he had seen the names of John himself, his wife, with those of two sons and a daughter, but since their insertion years had passed away, and under the changes and vicissitudes of life which the family seemed destined to undergo, all further traces of him had disappeared. He had conversed with several persons who had had at one time either a slight knowledge or distinct recollection of the family, but from the death of the father, when the younger branches become dispersed, all subsequent intelligence of them there also had ended. One of the sons, it was thought, had emigrated to America, the other to have passed southward, and taken up his abode in some large town in England, and the daughter was reported to have proceeded to Edinburgh, where she afterwards married a prosperous farmer, but whose name was not known by his informant. Such, then, up to this date, was the dim and uncertain pros-

pect before him respecting his distant kinsfolk. His time being entirely at his own disposal, he, however, determined upon prosecuting his purpose to the uttermost ; and the wild hills, with their bosky braes and crystal streams in the vicinity, offered ample scope for the indulgence of his fancy and other rural occupations, while a commission he had appointed was continuing the search.

Poets and painters, we are told, must be born to their respective arts. To anglers, we think, the same truism may be justly applied. Love, application, or ambition for either may attain much, but without the maternal gestation nothing great will ever be achieved. Though passionately fond of the rod, our hero by the stream was in reality no Walton. His mind or his fancy was too prone to rove, too excursive, to long continue bridled down to his line or fly. He loved the pastime, it is true, but not more for the sport it yielded than for the other exhilarating pleasures with which it is associated. With him, therefore,

an unsuccessful essay on the water—a blank creel—was but a trifling disappointment.

Always some equivalent unexpectedly turned up on his way, some agreeable incident, some small adventure, some beautiful landscape or rustic scene, which he invariably told off advantageously against the loss of the fish.

One evening, as it happened, there had been a copious fall of rain, which, according to the theory of the savans, is, after a long drought, a sovereign remedy for coyness among the golden-spotted daughters of the stream. Early on the following day, equipped for the expedition, Lorange set out for the banks of the Whitadder. The point on that stream at which he intended to begin his operations lay some miles distant, in an adjoining parish, and near to a small village called Bountree. Upon this occasion he was so successful in his fishing that within an hour from commencement he had filled his basket, which was, however, of the smaller size. Yet the trouts continued in an “amiable” and sportive



mood, while, on the other hand, he had the best of the day before him. He now began to reflect whether he should here desist, or continue his sport, whereupon he came to the rational and humane conclusion that one basket was sufficient slaughter for one day, and that it were a barbarous diversion to kill fish merely for killing's sake; moreover, the weight of his creel was then more than he intended to carry to his somewhat distant home.

While deliberating with himself in this manner, his eyes being directed to the opposite bank, he observed the figure of a young girl, of about the age of twelve years, walking directly towards the river. She had her dress tucked up to her knees to avoid the dampness of the long grass, and she was without shoes or stockings. In this state she entered the stream, for the purpose of crossing it, about a stone-throw below where he then stood, and a few feet above a deep pool which he had just passed.

As the girl reached the centre of the current,

through an attempt at some adjustment of her dress, she dropped into the water an umbrella, which she then held under her arm. It was immediately borne away by the flow, upon which, probably unaware of the danger, she made some hasty steps downwards, in order to recover it. Perceiving this, Lorance, now running forward called upon her to stop, or instantly she would be out of her depth, and drowned in the deep pool. She obeyed, and for the space of a few minutes following, our angler found an opportunity for the exercise of his skill, in hooking the umbrella in the still water, and bringing it safely to land. Tears for the loss of the article had begun to flow, but they were speedily stopped by its recovery.

This girl was a simple daughter of nature, graced with a pleasing diffidence, without timidity in her manner, and was perfectly confiding with the stranger. Observing that her dress by her efforts had been almost entirely immersed in the water, he proposed to accompany her to a

small inn he had noticed not far distant, where she would be able to dry her clothing by the fire. She readily consented, and the two directly proceeded thither. On their way he enquired her name, and if she would accept a dish of trouts for her parents. She answered all his questions with a readiness and simplicity, which much pleased her conductor, and said that she was sure her mother and father would be much obliged to the stranger for the trouts, as well as for his other kindness to herself.

The inn bore the name of "Dick's Ha'," was very humble in its pretensions, and situated by the side of a parish road, and close upon the brink of the stream.

Lorance, never loth to avail himself of an opportunity of noting the domestic ways of rural life, made his entry with the girl behind him. On hearing an explanation of the circumstances, the mistress of the house very hospitably desired the little visitor to walk "ben-o'-hoose," undress, and go to bed, while she dried her clothes,

and prepared some warm "kail" for her. To grace the occasion, our angler ordered a liberal refreshment, of which he, however, was in no need, having already pic-nic provision in his pocket. It was into the kitchen, or "but-end" of the house which he had entered; and in a remote corner of it, he sat himself down, where a small table and chair were placed for him. Glancing round the interior, he observed a man in a half-reclining posture upon a small bench, within a recess, by the chimney. He was in a state of profound sleep, and had a roll or web of flannel placed under his shoulders, and his head rested against the whitened stone wall.

Lorance looked at the sleeper, and thought he recognised in his features the individual who had served upon him the summons to attend the court, elsewhere noticed in these pages.

The man continued for some time in this state, when, suddenly springing to his feet, and rubbing his eyes, he ejaculated,

"What's to pay, Peggie?"

As yet he had not observed the stranger at the further side of the room, who was now, by the lady's permission, indulging quietly in an odorous cigar. Sniff-sniffing at the smell of the oriental weed, he turned his face round, and immediately bowed to the gentleman.

"It's a fine day, Mr. Langton," he said, without betraying the least surprise in observing him.

"It is indeed a fine day for these rather cloudy and uncertain regions," answered Lorange, removing his cigar; "but you have the advantage of me, friend, in the knowledge of name, though not quite in the recognition of features."

"I beg your pardon, sir; indeed, I owe ye more than one apology, if it's to be confessed," returned the other, again nodding his head; "my name's Webster—Yadie Wabster, as I'm better kenned be that here-away, than onything else. Aye, it's a vera uncertain region, this we're in, sir, mair ways than yin; for I've seen mair muir-cocks an' heather-cowes the day, for nae purpose,

than I've dune for mony a lang month. I've travelled fast an' far, sin' I got up this mornin', to a herd's hoose, among thae hills, an' the only livin' creatures I saw, after I got there, was a hungry sow, grumphin in a creuve, an' a wheen hens scartin on the midden. The door was locked, the gude-wife a woo-gatherin'; an' sae I had my tramp for my pains, an' this flannen wab t' carry into the bargain."

"You look indeed fatigued, Mr. Webster."

"Aye, sir, but am like the cuddies wi' thee lade—I'm used t' it; and the refreshing nap I've had, an' a drap o' Peggie's yill, will, I think, pit me clever on my feet again."

"Now, Mr. Webster," said Lorance, with an air of seriousness, "this is the first time I have been within the walls of this little house, and I am determined, in honour of ancient custom, to pay my 'footing;' and as I have a frail dread of country weavers, I think I cannot adopt a safer mode of propitiating the good-will of the brotherhood, than by now desiring that you will

accept from me some better beverage than the ale before you."

"Weel, sir," answered the weaver, with a 'ticklish cough,' which he said he was at times troubled with, "as this is no the first time I've had a bit warm i' that cosy nuke there; and as I would like to live an' die free o' malice an' rich in grace and forgiveness, I will accept a dram o' speerits on thae conditions."

"Well, then, you must show your sincerity, by calling for something worthy the occasion," replied our angler. "But let me assist you," he added; and desired some brandy.

It was no sooner placed on the table, than two other voices were heard without.

"Now Ralphy," sounded one of them, "just gie the galloway a wusp o' hye at first; an', after that, let her hae a drap water, an' a gude feed o' yeats, for she's had a lang journey the day."

"Here, laddie," said Ralphy (the host), passing the animal to a lad, "an' mind what's said t' ye;" with which he led the way with the other

into the house ; and when they had reached the floor—their backs being turned upon the other guests—“the deils surely in that woman,” he exclaimed, catching hold of the wet clothes before the fire, and throwing them aside ; “yin would think it’s a winters day, that she’s drying the duds afore the fyre, i’ this fashion. Was ever ony man trysted wi’ sic a daft woman, i’ this fine weather.”

“Aye, mony a yin, gude-man, after they couldna help it, like yersel,” interposed the hostess, quietly, who now made her appearance, and proceeded to gather up the clothes.

“Aweel, Peggie, an that’s ower true,” said the husband, good-naturedly ; “but whatever has happened t’ yer wuts, that ye’re cumberin’ the fyre-side wi’ wet claise, wi’ sic fine dryin’ weather outside ?”

“Whist, man—dinna fash yer thoomb wi’ ma’ business,” exhorted Peggie, “but mind yer manners afore yer freend ; and do ye no see I have company besides ?”



The two simultaneously turned round ; and the landlord made to the stranger a most profound and apologetic bow ; but his companion stood as if transfixed to the floor.

“Gude guide us !” he at length exclaimed ; “what do I now see ? The world’s surely comin’ to an end !—the prophecies are bein’ fulfilled !—the wolf and the lamb feeding together !”

Whereupon, recovering from his surprise, and recollecting himself, he took off his hood, and Robin Rawburn stood before Lorance Langton and Adam Webster, partaking of the same beverage, though at different tables.

Lorance immediately arose, and, requesting a shake of his hand, desired Robin to take a place by his table.

“I will have no apologies, Mr. Rawburn,” he said to the worthy drover. “I am as much surprised by the coincidence as you yourself can be.”

Sitting down and turning his face upon the weaver, Robin next said, gleefully.

“I’ll warrant for it, Ralphy” (to the landlord), “there’s mair i’ the wund the day than’s gude for everybody among thae hills, when I consider who we have under this roof. Take my word for it, it’s no for nathing that the beagle o’ Tackletight has scented out this gentleman by thae water-sides. I hope Mr. Langton” (turning to him)—“forgive ma freedom—that ye’ve no been doin’ onything i’ the decoying or abducting line, as lawair Broadbite would say, among the little bairns here away. Woe be to it if ye have, for ye may not find the white horse to stand yer freend the day.”

Before the speaker had finished the last sentence, an uncontrollable burst of laughter issued from the lips of Langton. So freely and heartily was it made, that it even exceeded, as it seemed, the expectation of Robin himself, as well as the others present. The circumstance of his having brought a little girl to the house, who was yet under the roof, had then appeared to him in a light which had not previously occurred to his mind.

But the weaver had not yet been made acquainted with the matter, and could not therefore fully realise the force of the remark. While Lorange continued his mirth, there was a slight pause with the company, which, however, was speedily interrupted by an advance of the hostess towards the table, who now very respectfully said,

“Sir, the little lassie ye brought to the house with ye is now dressed, and ready to go.”

All looked to the gentleman with astonishment.

“Will you be kind enough to fetch her to me,” he answered, with momentary gravity.

Within a second or two the landlady returned with the “lassie” by her side. The sight of the girl was, however, too much for Robin Rawburn. He jumped from his chair, danced about the floor, rubbed his elbow, and shook the house with laughter. The landlord alone was out in the matter.

An explanation now followed, and the girl, receiving half-a-crown from Lorange, sixpence

from the drover, and another from the weaver, dropped a courtesy, withdrew, and resumed her journey.

Her departure, however, was the signal for a renewal of some humorous banter between the weaver and the doughty drover.

“Fages me! Mr. Rawburn,” said Webster, “to say the least o’t, it looks unco suspicious that ye should just turn up i’ the nick o’ time when this gentleman has another bairn on his hands. But I’s e warrant ye, freend, I’ll keepa sharper ee on the white horse for times to come.”

“And I’ll bang ye for o’ that,” returned Robin, with a hearty laugh; “for unless ye hae a howlet’s eyen and the faculties of a tod t’ follow me i’ the dark, ye may lose yer cause bee a mistake o’ the colour, as others hae dune afore nou; for ridin’ hame at midnight it’s whiles mare than I can do t’ tell whether the sheltie’s white or broon.”

“Mr. Webster, I must assure you,” said Lorance, “that your perplexity is not now so

great as it might have been ; for the brown mare of former trouble has some days since been sent away to a distant part of the country."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the weaver, smartly ; "but there's waltha baith black an' broon horses left ahint her i' this parish."

"Yes, Wabster," cried Robin, "and plenty little bairns t' mount on them, too." Then, turning to Langton, he added, "Odd sakes ! sir, I begin t' be concerned for your safety if ye continue long among thae wild hills, wi' a heart an' a helpin' hand at everybody's call. For I may tell ye, what ye perhaps ken as well as myself, that in this world a man as often gets into trouble for gude motives as for bad intentions."

After a little further conversation, our angler arose to depart, liberally compensating the hostess for the trouble and attention she had bestowed upon the girl, and claiming his privilege of paying all the reckoning.

"As ye are going so far my way, Mr. Langton,"

said the drover, "if ye hae nae objection, I'll just gang down the haughs wi' ye."

The two, taking leave of the weaver, immediately set out together, Robin leading his pony by the bridle.

"I was just wantin' t' see you, Mr. Langton," said the latter, as they walked away, "and had determined to ride doon to the Creels on some early evening. I think, sir, I can now assist a wee bit by putting ye in the way of learning some thing anent the family ye once spoke to me about."

"Indeed, Mr. Rawburn," was the reply.

"Ye have seen, I believe, sir," he continued, "yin Dominie Sherra, the schoolmaster of Kittenaket."

"He, in company with another person," said the other, "called upon me at my inn, with the very singular request that I should perform the part of censor upon a large portion of manuscript, which he then expressed a wish to have pub-

lished on behalf of a spinster lady in some need."

"Well, sir, Mr. Sherra's the man who can help ye in the matter," said Robin. "I saw him the other day, and by him most respectful mention was made of your name, sir. The object of your search being spoken of by me, he said that he had a distinct recollection of the younger members of the family. It appeared there were two sons and a daughter. One of the former had died, so he had learnt, and the other had gone abroad; but the daughter, he believed, was still in Scotland; she had married a farmer in the Loudans, or in the west somewhere, whom he assured me he could readily trace out."

The gratification with which Lorance received this information was inexpressible.

"Mr. Rawburn," he said, "had you discovered for me the title to an earldom you could not have been the bearer of more agreeable tidings. In my pursuits I am not much addicted to despair, but of late my hopes began to considerably de-

minish on this subject. I shall now lose not a day before I endeavour to see the schoolmaster."

After this communication the two soon parted on their respective routes homeward.



## CHAPTER VI.

VISIT TO KETTLENAKET—JOURNEY TO EDINBURGH—  
STRANGE CHARACTER—A CURIOUS DISCOURSE  
UPON A LAW-SUIT.

EARLY on the following day Lorance Langton made a visit to Kettlenaket. It was a long, straggling, irregularly formed village. The school-house, with its play-ground in front, occupied a small quadrangular space bordering upon a public road. As the visitor approached he observed the worthy preceptor occupied, as he at first supposed, in teaching two little boys some

steps of a Scotch dance, but which he afterwards learnt to be a sort of exercise taught to all his scholars for the purpose of warming themselves in the cold winter days, as a kind of substitute for fire—good fuel, which consisted solely of turf, being often in adverse seasons, a scarce commodity in the district. The exercise may be described thus:—The boy, standing erect, makes a spring perpendicularly upwards, and, while in the air, his hands slap each thigh while his feet simultaneously strike each other, and, when alighting, sounds are produced representing two words, which being repeated read thus, “Lapperton-kirk, lapperton, lapperton, lapperton-kirk.” This exercise (a most healthful one, of which we can bear practical testimony), when continued for the space of a few minutes, puts the whole frame in a state of glow, and warms alike the feet and hands at the same time.

It was in this singular attitude in the air, his back presented to the visitor, that Lorance now beheld the sable figure of the respected school-

master. But no sooner had it been signalled by one of the boys that a stranger was advancing, than Mr. Sherra darted within his door, abashed, probably, at having been detected in an act of such apparent levity or indecorum in the eyes of a man of the world. Loitering about for a few seconds, in order to give the other a little time for any preparations he might wish to make for his reception, the visitor addressed himself to the children, and desired them to repeat the exercise they had been taking. He was highly amused by the activity and simplicity with which they performed the little feat. He next proceeded to the door, and was ushered into a room of indifferent order by a woman bearing an infant in her arms. In this lady we have the easy—we had almost said slovenly—*cara sposa* of the rural lord of the birch.

Mr. Sherra soon appeared, and, after apologising for his intrusion, Lorance explained to him the nature of the business which led to the trespass.

The schoolmaster, obviously somewhat sanguine in his mental temperament, expressed much pleasure in having an opportunity of serving the gentleman, and assured him that there was a fair prospect of speedily discovering the married daughter of his kinsman. Moreover, as the summer vacation of his school was then in progress, he proposed to undertake the entire enquiry himself, and to at once proceed to that part of the country where she was last reported to have been residing.

Gratefully accepting the proffered services, Lorange immediately placed a sum of money in his hands to defray the expenses thereby to be incurred; and thus confiding the matter to his trust, and humorously depositing a trifle on the table, to be awarded as a prize for the best performance of "Lapperton-kirk," he took a friendly leave.

Upon his return to the Creels, he found two letters awaiting him—one from Grizell Keith, containing a favourable report of her health, and

of some pleasurable excursions she had had with her hospitable friends. The other was from his factor, a Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, expressing a wish that his client would visit the Scottish metropolis before his return to the south, and do him the honour to become his guest for such time as he could spare, assigning as his reason for the proposition, that he had some matters of business to discuss with him relative to the Comyn-Crypt estate.

By the evening of the second day following, Lorange was in Edinburgh, but as at all times he preferred an hotel, even though humble, to a friend's house, he drove directly to the Royal, in Princes Street. Few men felt more at their ease in "mine inn," or in a populous city, than did our hero.

About noon on the next day he had a conference with his professional man, and at the hour of six sat down to a neat dinner with that gentleman. During his brief stay in town he allotted a portion of his time to re-visiting some of his former

haunts within the picturesque environs, and other objects of interest in the city. To some of the new "sights," and on these "pious pilgrimages" he was politely offered an escort from the office of his lawyer, but preferring to be alone upon such occasions, he gratefully declined these civilities.

Of all places within the circumference of this northern capital, not inaptly—save for sundry anti-Grecian tendencies—termed modern Athens, the High Street, with its twin-sister, the Canon-gate, despite all their notable evening odours, possessed for Lorange a peculiar attraction.

The Castle, like a vast stag, resting proudly upon its rocky base, and looking defiantly into the distance, with the fair champagne chequered with luxuriant fields and clustering trees prostrate at its feet, forming a striking termination in the west; Holyrood Palace, sunken, fallen and forlorn, like an outcast maiden driven from the doors of fashion and splendour, closing up the line in the east; while their numerous wynds, closes, and alleys, burrowing in the mason work,

like so many rabbit-runs, adown the steep banks to the right and to the left; the grim and faded mansions on either side of the ancient thoroughfare, with a succession of curious angles, abutting gables and fairy-like roofs, hanging dizzily in the air. These remarkable features, we would say, with all their historical associations of the past, can hardly fail to render this place one of the most interesting and suggestive in Scotland.

While elbowing his way through the crowds of idlers, loungers, and slip-shod denizens of the adjoining dark lanes, which congregate on the pavements of this thoroughfare, Lorange's attention was attracted to the tinkling music of the High Church bells—years ago familiar to his ears—which had struck up in the belfry one of their ancient chimes. He was a little westward of the edifice, and was listening pensively, when a man, whom he had occasionally observed to slowly pass and repass him on his morning lounge, addressed him, prefacing his words by a re-

spectful rise of the hand to the front of his "blue bonnet."

"If ye would like, sir, t' see the warks" (alluding to the bells), "I ken where t' apply for permission."

"Thank you, good man," returned Lorange, "but I have no curiosity on that point."

"Maybe, sir, ye would like t' see the Regalia i' the Castle; it's well worth seein'—or Holyrood Palace, or the High Court of Justiciary, close by. I make my livin'," he added, "by showing to strangers such places in the town."

Declining his services to the former places, which he had already revisited, Lorange, by way of patronising his office, placed a shilling in his hand, and desired him to conduct him to the door of the latter, in which, as he had been informed by the individual, one of the greatest orators of the Scottish bar was then engaged in arguing a protracted cause. As they moved along the pavement towards the porch, they



passed two gentlemen leaving the court; one with an arm in that of the other, and they were in cordial conversation.

“That fallow on the right, sir, is a lawair; but yin o’ our sma’ fry,” remarked the guide, pausing to look at them; “the other is his client, as he calls him, and expects, with some others, as he would make believe, to come into a great lot o’ siller and other property. I ken them baith a wee. I was yince employed by them to hunt up some persons they wanted for evidence in their case, but no sic folks could be heard o’, if they ever lived.”

“Indeed,” was the response of the listener, given with indifference.

“Their cause has made a great talk in this town,” he further added, evidently anxious to earn a little attention in his favour, “because the defendant belanged t’ yin o’ our great firms, and was weel kenned an’ esteemed here.”

“And has the case gone against him?” enquired Lorange, carelessly. ;

“No, no, sir; it’s been on several times, and is to come on sune again, I hear.”

“What was the case?”

“Ye may hae read of it, sir,” answered the other, pleased with finding an opening for further conversation; “it was in a’ the newspapers. It was headed *A. versus B.*” (These initials are fictitious).

“But in such an important case, was there no other counsel employed than one of your sma’ fry?” said Lorance, a little amused.

“Yes, sir; able advocates on both sides,” returned the guide. “They had muckle need, for credit’s sake, to hae had other men than Jamie Swaaps, for that’s the common name they gie the chap that’s just gone past us. He’s only employed to rake the gutters o’ the law for better men t’ find the pebbles; though, keep him frae the bottle, he’s a gye clever, crafty loon, an’ gets a gude deal o’ low, dirty business. Sic men, sir, are as usefu’ in the law as sweeps in our lums.”

Lorance laughed, and inquired if the other gentleman was the principal on his side.

“He’s nae gentleman, sir; for he didna pay me what he promised for my trouble, and I would hae naething mair t’ do wi’ his great promises when he succeeded. But he’s no the principal neither, as I’ve been told bee yin that kens mair aboot the matter than I do. He only lately squatted doon in Edinboro’, like a crow i’ the mist, from God knows where, and is, in fact, as it turns oot, in the manner of a cinder gatherer on our middens, howkin’ up the rubbish from the dust, which he reports to be genuine ccal, to make a legal flame, an’ keep it burning as lang as he can gull the folks an’ make a livin’ be’t. Nae suner is yae mare’s nest flown than he snowks oot another somewhere else, an’ he’s the principal in this—he’s the principal in hawrlin up the dirt for Jamie Swaaps t’ riddle for him.”

“I’m afraid his short payment has prejudiced you a little,” said Lorance, much amused by the severity of his remarks. Then he asked the

guide his name, conceiving him to be somewhat of a character.

“Andrew Rutherford, sir,” was the reply.

“Well, Andrew,” he said, “will you call upon me to-morrow forenoon at the Royal Hotel?—there is my card. Any time between ten and twelve o’clock will suit me.”

Andrew had an engagement for that day, but proposed to call in the evening to place himself at the other’s command on the succeeding day. This being arranged, Lorance turned round and entered the Court, but did not long remain a listener to the great orator spoken of; the technicalities of the Scotch bar were too abstruse for him.

Our Rambler now directed his course towards the college. After he had here sauntered about for some time, recalling to his memory many a scene of past years, he bethought himself of paying a visit to a person whose acquaintance he had chanced to make while roving amongst the Lammermoors, and whom he had met in town.

This individual was labouring under some prolonged ailment, and had come to town to obtain the professional aid of some eminent physician. For this end he had lodged himself in a small but respectable Temperance Hotel or coffee house, situated in the immediate vicinity of the college.

On entering the house, Lorange was ushered into what was therein termed the public room. Here he found the invalid seated by the fire, and in the act of listening to a fellow lodger, who was then discoursing upon a topic with considerable volubility. The speaker had some loose sheets of paper in his hands, while sundry others lay on a table by his side, to which he had been making occasional reference. When the visitor entered, the other, folding up his papers, made a move to retire, but the former begged he would not leave the room on his account, protesting that he had called merely to inquire for the health of his friend, and to pass an hour with him, whereupon the other reseated himself. After an exchange of a few remarks between Lorange and the in-

valid, the latter observed that the gentleman present had been entertaining him with an account of a law-suit, in which he was then engaged. The remark being made in the hearing of the party referred to, it served as a sort of introduction, and a few words followed. But our visitor at the time showed no inclination to become enlightened upon a matter in which he felt no personal interest. Still the other, whether from a desire to enlist sympathy on his side, or any other motive, certain it was that he evinced a remarkable disposition to introduce the subject to strangers. Lorance, however, chiefly from politeness, allowed the lodger to proceed with what he considered at the time to be an innocent hobby, conceiving that a person in his present position could scarcely be engaged in a case of much importance. But his indifference soon underwent a change, for at this time the speaker found occasion to leave his seat and walk to a table on the further side of the room, upon which the reluctant auditor's curiosity became suddenly

awakened; this was, however, rather towards the person himself than the subject of his discourse. In the peculiar gait and figure of the individual, Lorange at once recognised the man who had that morning been pointed out to him by Andrew Rutherford, as the “client” of a gentleman of the law profession, said to be flourishing in the city under the name of Jamie Swaaps. The few words in allusion to the man’s character by the guide now occurred to his mind; and he felt an idle curiosity, and now no disinclination to witness a slight exhibition of his genius after his own fashion.

The gentleman—so we must here term him in opposition to Mr. Andrew Ruthford—might be about the age of sixty years. He was endowed with features of the coarser mould; small cunning eyes; protruding, almost level upper teeth; oblong face, with tints of bleached red upon his cheeks, which were well garnished with pepper and salt whiskers; and he wore a moustache of a darker hue, but thickly interspersed with white bristly

hairs. His height was about the ordinary standard—his frame of a muscular, hardy, or durable cast, and he carried his head with a forward droop, which had the effect of raising a pair of heavy round shoulders into the form of a hump, and he walked with a slight swing or trail in his stiff legs. He spoke with a Yorkshire or Durham accent.

He spoke of “his case” in something of the North Atlantic style—characterised it as one of the “greatest magnitude that had been before the lords of court within the last century,” involving, as he said, millions of “hard cash,” and thousands of the finest acres of land in Scotland. From astounding revelations and discoveries which he had made in it he looked forward to the ultimate issue with a “dead certainty,” although by some “rash and premature moves” in its progress he had sustained a check; but had not been beaten. And he triumphantly claimed for himself the entire credit for its present advancement, and for the “vast and prodi-



gious researches " that had been achieved by him, assuring his listeners parenthetically that he had the honour of being the sole and "confidential lay agent" of the principal on his side, for collecting and "working up" the requisite materials for the hands of his lawyers; and that but for his humble efforts, and indefatigable perseverance, the suit would have been abandoned at the close of the first "brush with the enemy."

"Then you have sustained a repulse in the first instance?" said Lorance, greatly amused.

He admitted so much, but imputed the failure not to his fault. He then went on to say that his "chief" was a gentleman of boundless wealth and landed property in A——; and that by that potentate he himself was invested with unlimited powers to command and expend any amount of money upon the suit, in order to have his just claims established by law; although he gave his personal assurance that the millionaire did not care a dollar for the prize itself, nor would he ever exchange a residence in his own

country for the best upon "his recovered estates in Scotland," but would at once bring the "acres to the hammer."

"In that case you would, I presume, have the direction of their disposal?" again said Lorange, with assumed gravity, though much diverted. "I am interested here, you will perceive, sir; for I am excessively fond of grouse-shooting, and might probably, under your auspices, obtain on easy terms a portion of the fine moors belonging to the estates."

These words were no sooner expressed than the gentleman turned to a table with an air of great condescension laid his hands upon his card, as also upon a very ancient Scotch newspaper, and presented them; the latter he said he had extracted as a curiosity (having a taste for antiques), from a heap of others which had been submitted for his investigation, and he hoped the receiver would accept it as such. They were both accepted with all due politeness; and, let us add by the way, are still

preserved by the writer of this narrative, not only as a memorial, but a voucher, if needs be, for the authenticity of this curious incident in our pages.

When the presentation had been concluded, the speaker resumed his exposition with renewed animation. A settlement by compromise, he said, had frequently been suggested to him ; but his motto from first to last had been “ no quarter—all the stake or none.” Overtures to the effect from the “ enemy’s camp ” had indirectly been made, but, avowedly from a sense of steadfast integrity, he had repudiated them with scorn. “ Old ——, the crafty fox,” (this was presumed to refer to his opponent) would gladly, he knew, give twenty thousand pounds, to tie his hands or be closeted with him for half an hour ; but he would not give him the chance for twice the money.”

We omit here a portion of the harangue, which could in no degree be found edifying to a polite reader. Alluding to the evidence he had accu-

culated on his side, he assured his two auditors that the whole chain was completed, and in the hands of his professional men, except one small link, and that insignificant atom lay safely interred in a distant churchyard, awaiting only his journey thither to dig it up.

Lorance, whose surprise and amusement up to this stage had been about evenly balanced by this unexpected entertainment, now felt somewhat curious to know what this important link consisted of; and when it had been described to him, he ventured to inquire why it had been so long omitted, and suffered now to remain unrecovered, since of such inestimable value. This was an unfortunate question, for its answer had a most disenchanting effect, and cost, we fear, the querist all future hope of grouse shooting under the other's favour.

"Why," replied the gentleman, with something of a jocose and confidential smile, "it's just the question I expected a shrewd man to put to me. Well, then, to be frank with you, I have,

at present, exhausted my treasury, and am only awaiting the arrival of cash to enable me to proceed to the spot to complete the business, for it can't be done without a vast expense. But if any gentlemen interested in the concern, and, for the sake of expediting the thing, thought fit to either accompany me with a little cash, at his command, or otherwise invest a few pounds in the enterprise, I should take care to make it worth his while to do so."

"Of course, I am interested in the matter," said Lorange, without the least change on his countenance, though recollecting the speaker's previous boast of having at his command any amount of money for the prosecution of his object, "but not quite to the extent you now require. My look out extends simply to the slice of the fine moors I spoke of, and nothing beyond it."

A blank look of disappointment followed this reply; and after the gentleman had been subjected to a few further interrogations respecting

the probability of finding his sovereign link, which the other regarded in the light of the philosopher's stone, he picked up his papers and departed. But as this enterprising individual appears again in a subsequent part of our narrative, the reader, if so inclined, will have a further opportunity of renewing his acquaintance.

## CHAPTER VII.

AN EVENING AT THE WIG AND GOWN SUPPER  
TAVERN.

THE clock of the Trone Church had barely tolled off the hour of eight, when Andrew Rutherford appeared on the steps of the Royal Hotel.

“Is there yin Maister Langton in, Jimes?” he said, addressing a waiter familiarly, who was already at the door.

“There is, Andraw,” answered the other, placidly. “D’ye want t’ see him?”

“The gentleman requested me t’ ca’ on him the night, at eight o’clock.”

“Vera weel, Andraw.” Upon which the man in the white tie disappeared—tapped at a door.

“Come in,” was the response.

“One Andraw Rutherford wishes to speak with you, sir,” delivered the so-called Jimes.

“Tell him I will see him at the door immediately,” replied his guest. Whereupon he arose, put on his hat, lighted his cigar in the hall, and walked out.

“You are punctual to time, good man,” he remarked, as he received a salute.

“I make it a point o’ duty t’ be so at a’ times, sir, whether with gentles or semples,” returned the guide, with an air of unfeigned conscientiousness.

To avoid the crowded thoroughfare, the two now moved to the opposite side of the street. Here, amongst his first remarks, Lorange informed Rutherford of the incidental meeting he



had had with his former patron, the “client” of Mr. Jamie Swaaps. With the brief account he gave of that gentleman’s exposition of his case, Andrew was much amused.

“I would hae gien a’ the day’s hyre, sir,” he said, “which is five shillings, t’ hae been a moose i’ the cupboard, an’ heard the fallow tellin’ sic lees. If I could have but keek’d in my face at the door at the time, ye would hae heard nae mair about his ‘overtures’ and his bribes. It’s the way he gangs on wherever he goes; an’ he tells the pair folks he employs on his dirty wark, and where he lodges, that he’s to be a large sharer o’ the property when the case is ended, an’ gets often credit an’ living on the strength of it. He has dune sae t’ tway on three landladys, that I ken o’, an’ will do the same to Mrs. J——n, where he is now. He owes her, for she told me, over twenty pounds already, and she canna get a haupeny o’ it. There is aye siller comin’ in heaps, but it never comes, an’

he'll bilk her in the end, as he's done others. But his coorse, like the Deil's tae-nails, when ower lang, will be cut short some day ; an' I ken yin will do it, if he dinna sune pay him what he owes."

"I want you to-morrow, Andrew, to accompany me to Leith," said Lorance, changing the subject. "Many years ago, there lived a man in that town, of whose family—if such there be—I should like to learn something."

The journey was accordingly settled upon, with the hour fixed for the start. The evening was early, and, as is often most sensibly felt by the stranger in Edinburgh, without friends, or the resources of a club or theatre, in which to while away a dull hour, the time seemed to hang heavily and monotonously upon his hands. The theatre at the period was, indeed, dismal. The versatile Murry, and the inimitable Mackay, had left the boards, and, as frequently experienced on the landscape after the setting of a bright sun, a chill

and gloom seemed to pervade the house. Of the latter, Lorange was acutely sensible, having often, in earlier days, sat in Shakspeare Square under a more glowing atmosphere. A few days' sojourn at an hotel is not quite an occasion for study, nor even for reading, beyond an ordinary glance at a public newspaper. He had heard and read of famous re-unions of wits in the city—of the sprightly and gifted Pleydall, with his kindred peers; and, like Norval in the play, he now longed to follow some trusty guide to the evening rendezvous of such good company. He taxed the knowledge of his public cicerone, but—alas! these happy scenes had all passed away with the men and manners of by-gone times, and were now only to be found in books; or, if such were still in actual being, they were altogether inaccessible to the stranger. With such untoward prospects before him, we fancy he must have viewed his condition somewhat in the light of the hen-picked husband, who, on being dragged out

of the canal, was asked why he attempted to commit suicide.

“Because,” said the man, “I did not know what to do with myself.”

He made another appeal to his simple counsellor, but in this instance, with a marked descent in the flight of his ambition. Here, however, he was not so unsuccessful.

Andrew knew of a place of some small celebrity, open to all comers, in the High-street, near to the law courts, where a man, “not over-particular for the want of great or grand folks,” might pass an hour amusingly enough, but with the further qualification, that it was not one in which he must expect either much intellectual entertainment or very refined manners; and that, while it tolerated nothing to offend against ordinary taste, it was often the scene of some witty and lively bickerings. It had known better times.

“What name is it known by, or has it one in particular?” enquired Lorance.

“It’s ca’d the Wig and Gown Supper Tavern, sir, and it’s muckle frequented, especially of an evening, bee writers’ clerks’ an’ other sma’ men o’ the law, who go there to eat Welsh rabbit suppers, an’ slocken their day’s drouth wi’ strong yill an’ whiskey toddy.”

Andrew’s description, and more particularly the name of it, at once took the fancy of our roving subject. It would, at least, he thought, afford him a little insight into the manner in which these gentlemen spent their social evenings. He accordingly expressed a wish to be conducted thither.

“For a stranger, it’s a gye queer gate to it i’ the dark,” here premised the canny guide, evidently cautious, lest he should compromise his credit by undue colouring; “but the lamps are burnin’, and I ken the way brawly; for I whiles gang there mysel’, when I’ve had a hard day, t’ get a dram or bottle o’ yill an’ learn the news, for it’s a wonderfu’ place for the toun clavers. It

has a rhyme, after the manner of motto, on a printed card hung again the wa' inside, which the clerks often repeat t' yin another when they've eaten their rabbit. It says this :—

“ ‘ A wig an' gown, quoth Lord Moncrief,  
May look both sage an' braw, man ;  
But what's a *plea'd* without a brief,  
Within a court of law, man ?’

“ A dram is here meant for a brief, and the breed an' toasted sheese for the wig an' goon.”

Lorance now required to hear no more of the Wig and Gown Supper Tavern, but at once made a step or two in the direction. But not so fast—Andrew had another preliminary to submit.

“ I hope, sir, ye'll excuse me,” he said, “ but I fear ye're a wee thing ower brawly dressed for the company ; they're often a bit shy afore fine strangers.”

“ Stop a moment,” replied the other, hastily turning round, “ I will remedy that.” Whereupon, he strode back to his hotel, put on a coarse

overcoat, which he buttoned up to his chin ; exchanged his hat for a large, round, blue bonnet, such as Rob Roy is represented to wear on the stage, and taking a stout staff in his hand, soon returned.

“Now, sir,” said the guide, somewhat diverted, “I think yer claise well pass muster wi’ the chaps, but I doot yer tongue, if ye speak, will betray ye t’ be English, an’ then they’re commonly gye chary afore a sootherner.”

“Do not be discouraged by that, my man,” returned Lorance, briskly, laughing. “I can change my tongue as readily as my hat ; at least, I could once speak Highland or Lowland Scotch with any rustic on the soil, and I don’t think I have quite forgotten either. But, Andrew,” he added, “I must now in return give to you a hint in season ; it is this—should you have any occasion to name me in the room, call me Duncan—Tom Duncan, a friend.”

“And a good, sturdy friend ye look, sir, for a

sma' man like me i' the dark, wi' yer Hieland bonnet and big stick," ejaculated Andrew, after taking a second glance of his figure; but soon checking himself, added, penitentially, "O, I ask yer pardon, sir, for my rudeness, and—"

"Nay, nay," interrupted the other, with a hearty laugh; "from this moment you must not ask my pardon for any familiar mode of addressing me for this night."

Thus mutually schooled for the adventure, the two now moved leisurely onward. Crossing the North Bridge, they soon entered the High Street, wherein, to avoid the crowded flagway, they betook themselves to the middle of the thoroughfare, and proceed westward until they came opposite to a narrow close or wynd. A few strides more brought them to the entrance, where the guide paused and cast a glance down the alley.

"Now," said he, "I'll lead the way, and ye maun mind ye're feet, if ye please, for the stanes are a wee wat and dirty for want o' the sun; an'



ye'll maybe no mind a bit hurry for a step or tway, for fear we get a patty o' wash" (for the southern reader—a bucket of household slops) "doon upon us frae some o'the high windows overhead."

Lorance laughed heartily at this timely cautioning, but he was not to be daunted by the chance of such contingencies. He knew Edinburgh of old, and had been in Rome and elsewhere, where similar domestic practices were not less common. The short passage was safely made, and, after ascending a stone stair of limited capacity, they were speedily within the threshold of the Wig and Gown supper-tavern.

"Gude een t' ye, Thames," said Andrew, as they entered, acknowledging the nod of a somewhat robust and *blasé* looking waiter. "It's a fine night, but slippy a wee. I've just brought a freend t' try yer best bottled yill, an' I hope it will do me credit for my recommendation."

"It's no for the like o' me, Andrew, t' cry

stinkin' fish," answered the portly majordomo, huskily; "but if he's a jeuge o' maut liquers, he'll sune find that oot."

The visitors entered a small compartment near to the door, and seated themselves one on either side of a table, where a bottle of ale with two stalked glasses were quickly placed before them.

The public room, which was of considerable length, was divided by a central alley into two halves, one side of which was open, and contained a series of tables with fixed benches, and had upon its flank-wall several daubs of paintings, with prints of judges or lawyers in gowns and wigs, indicating a decadence of taste in modern times. The other half was occupied by a succession of small compartments, each deeply boarded round, with a closing door, the latter appendages being seldom shut except on very private occasions. The air of the room was heavily impregnated with the smell and fumes of toasted cheese and other savoury viands; and it presented a

striking combination of very discordant sounds, in the clattering of dishes, the drawing of corks, and jingling of whiskey-pots, whereunto must be added the talking, laughing, and jabbering of human voices. The card containing the motto of the house was not, however, visible to our visitors.

In glancing through the area of this festive chamber, it behoves us yet to remark that, at its extreme and further end there was a considerable open space, within which stood a table of much larger dimensions than the rest, and capable of accommodating a dinner party of from fifteen to twenty persons. This, however, except when specially required, was seldom in use for dining, but was commonly resorted to after the eating was over, as a sort of retiring-room, and where at a certain hour the steam of hot punch and clouds of tobacco smoke were allowed to mingle lovingly together.

At one end of the board, especially when the

company was large, usually sat an important personage, deporting under the civic distinction of "Provost," and at the other a brother magnate, rejoicing in the title of "Sheriff."

By these two exalted functionaries, however, the onerous duties of the municipal government of the town were wisely left to the chief magistrate, and his fellow citizens. Nor, indeed, did either appear to possess any remarkable aptitude or personal ambition for such responsible offices. Moreover, we venture to opine that had either oratorical display or intellectual supremacy been insisted upon as a qualification for election here, the two enviable posts must have fallen to the lot of some others of the company. Indeed, were we now pressed for some distinguishable characteristic in either individual, we should refer the reader to choose an equivalent from amongst the various endowments of Tam O'Shanter and his illustrious companion, Souter Johnny.

The "Provost" had been elected, and had

faithfully discharged the duties of office for a succession of years; but the appointment of "Sheriff" was a less ceremonious affair; while as with most other functionaries of distinction, each had his "sub" or deputy.

In our imperfect sketch, however, we have held in reserve a very enviable "feather in the cap" of our President.

He could sing a good song, which, upon the averment of honest Andrew Rutherford, was better worth listening to than a "whole speech, of a real Provost."

On the evening in question there was not a large assemblage of guests; but as a standing rule of the house, strictly enjoined by the Provost, all strangers, or persons seated elsewhere in the room, were invited to contribute to the number at the table over their cups, if they chose to do so.

Andrew Rutherford, probably in part from his public calling, was, as appeared, not only

familiarly known, but much respected by several of the daily frequenters of this house. Farther, and what may have been thought worth gold to him, he was honoured with the esteem and distinguished patronage of the Provost himself.

Having been observed at a distance by one of the company, the waiter, "Thamas," was requested to ask Andrew to join them.

Andrew sought to excuse himself on the ground of having a friend ; but, no sooner was the answer returned, than his Worship, learning of the circumstance, repeated the invitation, appending thereto his august compliments to the stranger, and hoped he would waive formalities, and honour the table with his company.

Lorance at first hesitated, then arose and followed his guardian.

A chair was immediately placed on the right of the Provost for the stranger's reception ; but, declining such exaltation, he preferred a place lower down the board, where the light was not so bright for his "tender eyen."

“Mr. Rutherford,” said the Provost, “I must mulct you in a half-muchkin for a breach of good manners, by not having presented to me your welcome freend.”

“Weel, Mr. Cammell, if that’s the law, I maun pay the penalty,” answered the offender; “but if I am allowed t’ make amends for a faut, I may now tell ye he’s ca’d Maister Duncan on merket days, but plain Tam for ordinar, an’ he likes Tam the best amang his freends.”

“Hats off,” blurted out a screwy, wizen-faced elderly person, in shabby black, on observing the new-comers standing with their caps unremoved.

“Maister Cammell,” ejaculated Andrew, promptly, addressing the chair, “Will ye excuse my freend keeping on his bonnet, for he has rather tender eyen for a’ thae cannells; besides he’s got a bit scart on his pow, an’ he’s afraid the air gets in an’ canker’t, afore he gets hame t’ pit a crume o’ roset on.”

“Most unquestionably, Andrew; and you

likewise, if ye wish t' keep him countenance," was the imperative response. "But what are ye goin' to have, man? I must drink wi' your freend, ye ken."

Lorance was privately consulted on the point, but left the whole to his companion, whose droll and ready tact had already driven him almost into hysterics by suppressed laughter.

"I see," he replied, "your glass is teum up there—hadn' we better ca' in the half-muchkin an' be dune wi't; for ye ken, Maister Cammell, am a bet like yersell—I like fair play—fair play in everything, an' twere only in eatin' a haggis."

A roar of laughter now went round the table, in which "freend Tam's" voice was not the least distinctly heard. The measure of whisky was called in, from which the empty glass of his worship was first bountifully replenished. The "sheriff," it may be remarked, had not yet appeared in his place, he, meanwhile, having been closeted privately with some friends in one of the



boxes, while his chair was filled by another guest. However, this star of second magnitude soon emerged from its cloud, and passed on to its post at the board. Andrew Rutherford, who had been prepared for the transit of this luminary, looked askance at the gentleman, then whispered in the ear of his companion, "That's Jamie Swaaps." As we are not here describing a scene of fiction, we must abstain from personal portraiture. Let it suffice for us to say that he was dressed in an indifferent suit of black, had his coat very glossy, and frayed about the elbows and cuffs, and had a very red face, overspread with still redder "tackets" or carbuncles.

"Now, Sherra," said the provost, apparently more at his ease by the acquisition of this auxiliary to his power, "for your absence so long from your post, I ought to have you superseded, or indicted for misdemeanour; but I will let you off this once again if you will find us a gude sang down at your end of the table."

This, we were informed, was the usual mode of the president in proposing that the sheriff, seconded by the company, should ask himself for a song; it being a custom seldom infringed that no one should, in singing, take precedence of the chair. But the Souter knew Tam well, and their provost was speedily thumped down for a song. His first was the pretty pastoral, "Ca' the yowes to the knowes," which he executed with much taste and softness. To "Roy's wife of Aldivalloch," he also afterwards did ample justice, though upon a different key. Another song, given by a very old man, afforded much mirth; and as it was complimentary to the fair sex, and furnishes another illustration to the many on record of the power their beauty can effect upon rougher mortals, we will here extract a stave from it. The susceptible hero of the piece is crossing a moor when he meets with the heroine on her way to a neighbouring market town to sell some barley:—

“ As I was riding o’er the moor,  
I met wi a farmer’s daughter,  
Wi’ rosy cheeks and blooming eyes—  
Gude faith ! my mouth did water.”

Several other songs, by different individuals, were performed in a manner that would have done no discredit to a musical assembly of higher pretensions. Indeed, taking the promiscuous company as they sat, our traveller became confirmed in his former belief, that the Scotch nation contained a greater proportion of good and average singers, even Italy included, than that of any other people known to him. But we have anticipated the order of things.

After a few songs had been sung, the sheriff, in whose voice nothing of a musical ring could be discerned, and who, we were assured, was seldom called upon to inflict a stave upon his auditors, now arose, with some formality in his gesture, and addressing the chair, said,

“ Mr. Provost, I rise to propose, pursuant to custom at our social meetings, that each gentle-

man of the present company who has not yet sung, must be called upon to either favour us with a glee, give us a sentiment, or be fined glasses all round."

Jove nodded assent, and the "house was carried."

Andrew Rutherford, however, was about to spring to his feet and enter a protest, or plead exemption for strangers, feeling, probably some concern as to the manner in which his "ward" for the evening might acquit himself; but Lorange whispered him not to do so.

"Can ye sing, Mr. L——, I mean Tam; can ye sing, man?"

To the latter correction was given a little more voice in his whisper.

"Never mind the singing," again said the other, *sotto voce*, "I should prefer paying the fine."

"Thirteen glasses round! godsakes! an' a double for the provost—it's his custom! I

winna let ye stand that. But leave it t' me," added Andrew, with a wink.

When Andrew's turn came round for his song (which was the last but two, viz., his companion's and the sheriff's) he said, "Weel, gentlemen, I'll do the best I can t' please ye, and I'll also gie yer choice o' tway sangs—'Could Kail in Aberdeen,' or 'The Miller——,' " (we lost the other part of the title).

The choice fell upon the last mentioned; but to the no smaller astonishment of the singer himself than to that of his attentive listeners, he had no sooner commenced the song than up struck an accompaniment so perfect in its imitation of the clatter of a grinding mill at work, that, except perhaps from a lightness in the sound, the most acute ear could not have distinguished the one from the other. Not a voice or whisper, however, was heard during the performance, but all eyes were directed to and fixed upon two hands turning and beating alternately upon

the table, and those were the hands of "Tam Duncan." When the song was finished there broke forth a thundering of fists upon the board, with a hurricane of boisterous applause. The singer here, prudently, did not much regard this unmerited demonstration on his part, but at the conclusion turned his face upon his "friend," and said, dryly—

"Weel, Tam, I think ye hae taen mair than tway gude gowpensfu' o' mooter oot o' my meal-poke the night; an' if I didna ken better, I might hae taen ye for as honest a miller as ever grund a melder. Nevertheless, I'll forgie ye for the present, as our sherra said, generous man, when he took a baubee short o' his fee frae a bonnie lass in Lawson's Wynd, an' told her, wi' a chuck under the chin, he would let the balance stand over for another reckonin' (roars of laughter). But," turning to the chair, "Mr. Commell, if ye think I haena earned my warblin' laurels (an' ye're a gye gude jeuge o' music), I'll crune ye

another, an' let the last stand for friend Tam's here, who's a wee roopet wi' the could, an' at best no just a linty at singin'."

"Bravo! Andrew, bravo!" was vociferated all round.

Lorance's condition during these enactments must be imagined—Andrew's musical pretensions were but very limited, even by his own estimate. His voice was "small," but he had in his composition a spice of sly humour, a ready and comical talent, which he had the happy knack of turning to account either in a song or conversation, and in his forthcoming essay he succeeded to perfection. We here recite four lines of his second song—

"Gin a lass be e'er so black,  
Gin she hae the penny-siller,  
Place a hump upon her back,  
The wind will blaw a man til her."

We must now avail ourselves of a reporter's privilege after a "long sit," and retire for a few minutes' relaxation and refreshment.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE W. AND G. SUPPER TAVERN CONTINUED.—AN  
HISTORICAL SKETCH OF A LITIGANT.

WHEN Andrew Rutherford had finished his song, and received an amount of applause of his own earning, he turned his eyes to the foot of the table. It was a custom of the house that the last singer should name or call upon the next that was to follow him, and his small orbs now alighted upon the sheriff. Secretly for this gentleman he had no especial love, and on public



occasions, such as the present, when they met, he commonly contrived, after a fashion of his own, to have a sly shot at him.

“Now, Mr. Sherra,” he said, “I call on you for the next song.”

“Not so fast, Rutherford,” answered the gentleman, sharply; “there is a stranger present who must take precedence of me.”

“But he has already entertained the company.”

“Granted,” added the learned gentleman; “but he has not complied with our rule; he has not, *bona fide*, sung a song, or given us a sentiment. To thump upon a table, however cleverly, is not singing. True, you volunteered a second song, assigning the first as a substitute for that of your friend; but a song by proxy, unless submitted by a previous motion, and sanctioned by the company, is inadmissible in the present case. We must, therefore, have either a song or sentiment by himself, or he must pay the forfeit.

The gentlemen have all complied with the rule—for myself, I will make no exception when the time comes—and my motto is, let every man have his due. Shall we have in the glasses?” he concluded, addressing himself to the chair.

Andrew Rutherford rose with a stern frown upon his countenance, but he gave place to a young gentleman named Fyfe.

“A moment more I will not sit at this table, much less become a party to such gross and discreditable proceedings, if a stranger is to be invited or decoyed into the company to be choused or treated in a manner so unwarrantable.”

Several other voices were now heard, but soon became silenced by the rising of Tam Duncan himself.

“Maister Provost,” he said, “maybe ye’ll excuse a country fellow, no vera weel used t’ the better mainners o’ a toun, in rysin t’ address sae august a personage with a Heeland bonnet on his heed.” (“Bravo! Tam,” cried Andrew, with

some others.) “But some of the gude company among us are makin’ aboot as muckle ado for my silly sang or sentiment as the gude wife’s freends made aboot her bit tocher, when I fetched her hame ahint me on the galloway, and I think I will just settle the dispute here after the same fashion I did the other, bee gien them their ain way. The gentleman who honours us at the fit o’ the table tells us his motto is, let every man have his due. Now, approvin’ the sentiment, wi’ your leave, I’ll conform to his wishes, an’ give ye a bit story. But I maun premees this muckle, that, as I never telled the tale t’ onybody afore, and as I may no tell it ower perfect—for I’ve juste thought it ower syne I came in—if there be ony clever critics amang us, I hope they’ll consider the occasion, and ca’ canney wi’ their elbows. Sae here it is—

“Wild roving, as a mountain lamb,  
Once on the moor of Coldingham,

Hard by a drear and haunted fen,  
I saw two ghosts of living men.  
The chields looked neither lank nor tall,  
But strode in portly gait withal.

“ Each filled a suit of raven black,  
One showed a hump upon his back;  
His fellow's face was fiery red,  
With redder 'buncles overspread.  
They had been to a castle fair,  
Not distant far—no matter where—  
To plot its lord some grievous harm,  
By some unholy fiendish charm,  
But in the act were foiled—God wot—  
They fled, and thus pursuit so hot.

“ A rustic swain, in cap and plaid,  
Who on the neighbouring heath was laid,  
Sprung to his feet in dread surprise,  
And clasp'd his staff and rolled his eyes.  
Quoth I - ‘ What company have we here  
In this lone place, so wild and drear ?’  
As if demented by the sight,  
He call'd his dog and fled with fright.

“ Amazed, I stood and looked around,  
When, lo ! I spied a panting hound,  
His head upraised, outstretched his tail,  
And drinking deep the passing gale.  
Behind him close on rapid speed,  
A horseman spurred a chesnut steed,  
I watched both well, with steadfast look,  
To mark them charge a neighb'ring brook.  
If ghosts, methought—dog, man, and horse,—  
A running stream must bar their course.

“The bubbling ford had scarce been cleared,  
When on the further bank appeared  
Horseman and hound, unscathed, unstay'd,  
Nor by the yawning gorge delayed.  
Onward they sped, unslacked in pace,  
As urging on a desperate chase—  
But ah! too fast, too far they bent—  
They had outrode, outrun the scent.

“Had Roseman, as he spurned the ground,  
More sparing been of horse and hound,  
E'er yet he neared the mountain rill,  
And turned a flank upon the hill—  
Pursued with leisure step his course  
Adown a steep, o'erhung with gorse,  
Where opening on a rushy plain,  
He might have lifted scent again.  
But bootless still had been the toil,  
The fugitives might yet him foil,  
For when the desp'rate hound they saw,  
They dived into a babbinqua,  
Whereat the peawits, crains, and whaaps  
Cried 'fye for shame on Jamie Swaaps.'”

There was now an uproarious scene of mirth,  
with a look of fierce anger on the part of the  
sheriff. But triumphant Tam beckoned silence,  
and added,

“That these were wraiths of living men,  
Though why is far beyond my ken,  
This day in town, I'll stake my oath,  
In flesh and blood I saw them both.”

After another outburst of applause, in which the voice of the sheriff, vainly striving with the adverse tide, was faintly heard, the provost arose and, waving his hand, commanded silence.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “it is a duty we owe to ourselves to respect our sheriff, and to listen patiently to any personal grievance in this matter he may think proper to explain to us. But there is a primary claim upon me, as your chairman, which I now propose to discharge. We have been entertained, certainly in a manner far exceeding the expectation of many of us, by a very cleverly told story from a stranger in this room, and I now desire that you will replenish your glasses, and drink his health—Tam Duncan’s health and his story.”

While the toast was being heartily responded, with the reiteration of “Tam Duncan’s health and story,” the bacchanalian chorusers experienced an untimely interruption from the somewhat stentorian voice of a person advancing upon

them, with the air of a privileged intruder, who had just emerged from a remote box in the room, where he had been closeted with a party.

“Who’s this,” cried the individual, “taking my honourable name in vain?”

All looked round, and before them moved a tall, stalwart figure, in corduroy breeches, a velveteen coat, with a broad brimmed hat, overshadowing a luxuriant head of dark-curled hair and a round face, denoting an abundance of good humour, quiet and blunt confidence.

“Before ye had greeted my comin’ wi’ sic honours, I think, gentlemen, ye might as weel hae let me had a brief on the table, from which, as our learned friend, the sherra there, would say, I could speak to the purpose in addressing the coort. But,” continued the sturdy comer, removing his hat, and bowing to the two magnates, and some others, “I should like t’ ken why a’ this balderdash is made aboot me, afore I got time to weet my whustle among ye.”

There was now a general roar of laughter, in which Tam Duncan the second joined, but with a hesitation in his manner, signifying as much as that there might be something at the bottom of the demonstration with which he was not thoroughly acquainted. He was, however, cordially received by the provost and sheriff, whom it appeared he was in the habit of treating with some extra liberality on his occasional visits to the room. But of the company at the board there was one individual present by whom the intruder was secretly regarded with more than ordinary interest, and this was Tam Duncan the first; for in his sturdy namesake he saw a man who had rendered him valuable services, now several years ago, during his sojourn in the Highlands, and whom, in the earlier stages of this narrative, we have had occasion to bring before the reader, under the character of the "Owner of the Van," an appellation by which in his northern district he was popularly known. Lorange,



probably feeling his present situation somewhat peculiar, did not, however, deem it a proper time and place for a recognition, and he resolved to sustain, if he could, his incognito. The other took his place by the side of the chairman, from whom he received an explanation of the circumstance which had given occasion for their toast and its accompanying merriment.

“He’s tap-tookin’ fallow, Mr. Cammell, that namesake o’ mine,” said the new guest, in an undertone, to his companion, when “Tam” had been privately pointed out to him, at a little distance off; “but why is he sittin’ wi’ his bonnet on, when a’ the rest is bareheaded? I think I hae seen his face somewhere afore the night; but am no vera sure about it.”

“He’s from the country,” answered the other; “and his friend who brought him here says he has a hurt upon his head, which, as I allege, he had got by a cracky-stool from the gude wife before he came away to keep him in remembrance o’ her amongst the temptations of our metro-

polis. But I think he's a queer fallow, and has mair in him than he cares to make show of."

Our scene now changes. Within a few minutes following the entry of the last comer, it was observed that the sheriff had vacated his chair, which circumstance was again followed by a message from a neighbouring box to Andrew Rutherford, requesting him to proceed thither as he "was wanted." Andrew consented to obey the summons on condition only that his friend should accompany him, who was a stranger, and from whom he should not separate himself. The qualification was accepted, and accordingly the two took their leave of the table. On entering the cabin they found three individuals seated therein. One was a young gentleman, named Fyfe, whom we previously noticed as a guest at the general board. Having a familiar acquaintance with Rutherford, he now beckoned him with his friend to take places on his side of the small table.

The other two persons were the so-called sheriff,

*alias* Jamie Swaaps and his “client,” *alias* Tam Duncan’s brace of ghosts, with whom the luckless wight was now doomed to meet face to face, probably to render a speedy account to them for the dangerous use he had formerly made of his eyes on Coldingham Moors, or latterly of his tongue in his significant story.

Mr. Swaaps—so we shall here name the gentleman; sheriff only when in office—looked very fierce, while his companion appeared, on the opposite extreme, unusually silent.

As to Lorance, he no longer deemed it necessary to maintain his incognito.

Andrew Rutherford seemed perfectly composed, maintaining his ordinary mode of demeanour—quiet, canny, but ready to address himself with energy to whatsoever contingencies might turn up before him.

“Rutherford,” said the man of the law, with a sharpness of tone, and casting a side and rather ominous glance at the bonnetted Tom, not yet

known to him by any other name, "I have sent for you for the purpose of learning the address of the fellow who insulted me to-night, and who, I feel assured, did so through your instrumentality."

"Insulted you, man," returned Andrew, with seeming surprise, "hoo did that happen?"

"Affect no surprise to me, sir, in the matter," said the other blusteringly. "You know as well as I do, that some rude and unmannerly dogs, like your—"(here he checked himself), "have got a habit of calling respectable persons by low and slang—I should rather say, slanderous names."

"Hoot, toot, man," interrupted Andrew; "ye needna begin t' cut yer capers sae high afore me i' that Jethart fashion—yer faither was a Jethart man, a tyler bee trade, I believe—an' ca' the dogs waur thun the bitches; for ye ken it was only the ather day, gaun up Lawson Wynd—I was a bit ahint, ye—when tway fat lasses, wi' their bare heeds oot o' an open window aboon ye, cried

out, 'There goes Jamie Swaaps—are ye no comin' up, Jamie, to get the baubee balance o' yer last reckonin'?' "

"They were public strumpets," replied the other, in great wrath.

"That ye ken best," answered Andrew, slyly dealing him another thrust, "but they seemed acquaintances o' yours, anyhow."

Lorance, apprehensive that he should no longer maintain his gravity, and, perceiving that Mr. Swaaps had received a very damaging blow at the first onset, and was wholly over-matched by his opponent, resolved to at once settle this point himself.

"Sir," he said, "I will save Mr. Rutherford the trouble you desire of him in this matter, by informing you that my address in town is the Royal Hotel, Prince's Street. But as I cannot see you there, or otherwise avail myself of the honour of your acquaintance in public, I must refer you for any interest you may be disposed to

take in my address to Mr. C——, W. S., Queen-street.”

These words fell with an astounding effect upon the ears of the gentleman, who, as report went, was habitually addicted to bully, bluster, and intimidate simple people by threatening them, as occasion served, with all the terrors of the law—a course of practice in his profession, upon which his livelihood for some years had not a little depended. The brief sentences were given in the speaker’s usual style, and formed a striking contrast with those the listener had heard uttered by “Tam Duncan” in another part of the room.

Beaten by Rutherford, and thus shorn of his law terrors, Mr. Swaaps now assumed an attitude bearing some resemblance to that of a cowed mastiff which had received an unexpected hug from a bear; he sulked, and spoke not a word further on the subject. But the evening here was not destined to close with this skirmish. Two other fresh combatants were yet awaiting their

turn. The name of one of these we have already noticed in Mr. Fyfe, the other was the "lay agent of the millionaire," of whom a slight sketch elsewhere has also been given, and of whose industry and steadfast integrity on behalf of his master, in his enterprise at law, can scarcely have failed to win the admiration of the reader. *Audi alteram partem* is a trite but judicious axiom among jurists and jurymen, and the obverse of his picture may repay the perusal of the curious. But a word here to our patient companion before we submit to him our notes as taken down almost verbatim during the occurring scene.

Were we now engaged in writing a novel, it would become our first consideration to choose or invent such incidents for our work as seemed best calculated to sustain an uniform interest or stimulate the curiosity of those who honoured us with their favour. Such may be termed the high or popular road of romance. But as we are occu-

pied in recording a succession of humble events, either relating personally to the subject of our narrative, or coming directly under his observation in the course of his rambling life, we are constrained to deal with matters as they come before us, common place as they may seem. The present incident, namely, the law suit already noticed, and to which the following refers, possesses nothing in itself to commend it to the special attention of the reader, or even to a place in our pages—nothing beyond the actual fact of its existence, and of having attained considerable notoriety at the time of its occurrence. It, however, affords us an opportunity of chronicling a curious scene in this room, from which we may judge how far a simple charge or dispute in a court of law may, *ex curia*, be made the medium of a lucrative trade by the devices of daring, unscrupulous men.

Mr. Fyfe took the initiative. He was an acute, genteel-looking young man, of about the age of



twenty-two ; he had been for some time in a writer's office, but had subsequently quitted his post there for some other occupation. He had a charge against Mr. Crox—so we shall here name our “client” or “litigant”—for non-payment of certain sums of money due to him, as the price of his labours and other contingent expenses, in collecting and preparing sundry documents, alleged to contain important evidence upon the “great law case.” In stating his own claims, he alluded to several other debts which had come to his knowledge, incurred under similar circumstances elsewhere, and he now demanded immediate payment on his own behalf, under a threat of apprehension for debt. But the other was evidently not a man to be readily scared by simple words or shadows.

“I despise,” he said, “your threats as I do your unmannerly mode of attacking me before these strangers. Did I not tell you, sir, when you were recommended to me as a person competent to do what I required—”

“Not what you required, I trust, but what you then spoke of,” said the young man, interrupting him.

“Well, then,” he continued, “at our first interview, did I not tell you that I could not promise payment of more than a portion of the expenses to be incurred by your services until the case was concluded? The professional gentleman now by my side is, I think, a substantial witness to that proviso.”

“I will attest that when the time comes,” grunted the individual spoken of, “but I don’t wish my name to be further mixed up with the present company.”

“Aye, ye’re right in that, freend Swaaps; let ilka dog lick its ain sores in peace,” put in Andrew Rutherford, with an ironical look of sympathy.

“Granted,” replied Mr. Fyfe; “but even under that proviso, as you term it, a man so employed would naturally expect meanwhile, something more than half-a-crown to the pound due to him—”

“Now, sir,” said Crox, with a sardonic smile, interrupting the other, “by your admission of that proviso, you have no legal power to press me for payment, since the case is not ended; therefore, if you are not disposed to wait peaceably, like others, till that event takes place, you may go and do your worst. And take care, let me advise you not to again insult or annoy me before strangers.”

At these words the young gentleman, with a mild determination in his look, spoke nearly as follows :

“Now, sir, these being your sentiments, it is but fair that you should understand mine, so as to remove any further misconception between us; and I trust you will profit from them, as I hope to do from yours. Over them I may occupy a little too much of your time, but, as the reward of your patience, I do hereby promise, making a virtue of necessity, to not only peaceably await the termination of your case, but, in the presence

of these witnesses, to give you this night, a free discharge from all my claims upon you. In proceeding with this matter, I will first ask you—for now I have but too much reason for my doubts—Who are likely to become the *gainers* at the close of this suit, over which, by your own showing, you so mysteriously preside? It will certainly not be the defendant, and as certainly not your duped so-called ‘chief.’ Who, but some legal gentlemen and yourself? None. But it is with yourself I have here to deal; and now I must give you credit for the wisdom, if not for the principle, with which you have anticipated the issue—”

“What do you mean, sir, by *duped* chief, and by my anticipations?” inquired Crox, with uneasiness.

“Your first query,” returned the other, “I will answer in due course—the latter now. Your anticipations, sir, amount to these—and think not, sir, that I will shirk either question, or be

be niggardly with you on this our balancing night. For some time before, and especially since its commencement, you have been reaping a goodly harvest by, in plain English, living upon the credulity of the public. Don't startle. You know that I know it. Nay, more, fashionable man that you are—you have appended to your establishment a fair "cousin" to grace your enterprise, with whom I had the honour of drinking a cup of tea at your landlady's expense ; for when you removed your small chattels therefrom, you left one important article behind you, namely, her bill unpaid. Do not storm, or move, for hear me you shall, and then we are quits. Rutherford, turn the key, and put into your pocket. "(The guide obeyed," Now, I will take the liberty of asking you one or two more questions. Who am I addressing? who are you? whence came you ; and under what extraordinary circumstances did you contrive to get your fingers and thumbs introduced into this Scotch pie? I will answer

the queries for you, on the faith of your own statement to me, though perhaps in words after my own fashion. You are a native of a northern county of England, wherein early in life you entered into business ; but whether you left the business, or the business you, or whether the parting was on the principle of ‘even quits,’ does not concern us here. You had a speculative turn. You went to Ireland ; and there, in poor Paddy-land, looking sharply about, you espied, as stated by you, on the western coast, some hundreds of feet beneath the barren surface, a glittering mine of lead, iron, or other mineral. A mining company was formed ; money and shareholders were forthcoming ; but, haplessly, as miners and colleagues, you could not manage the ‘black-guard Irish’ (the words are your own), “and you prudently ‘cut the concern,’ not, however, without leaving occasion for some friendly enquiries after you. You then crossed the Atlantic, and there traversed sundry of the Virgin States,

often, of course, trying your hand at ‘som’at’ on the way. For some time Fortune seemed to be in a doggish humour with you. At length the lady smiled, and you alighted upon something good—a sunny spot, upon which you would have taken root, shot up, and swelled around into the lordly magnitude of a native pine. But—ah! these buts!—but alas, again, you found the ‘d——d Yankees’ were as hard to manage as your old friends ‘the Irish.’ Again ‘lick’d’ by this speculation, with marvellous perseverance, you next mounted a sturdy nag, travelled through an almost trackless forest of some hundred miles in length. This feat accomplished, you once more got into sunshine, and finally arrived in a province where dwelt a sylvan millionaire, who, humanely taking compassion upon you, provided for you a resting-place, with some employment, for a time. A ‘fresh Britisher’ there, as in many other remote parts, was gazed upon as a *rara avis*—rarer indeed,

than a black swan. He was moreover looked upon as an oracle. An oracle of intelligence from the 'Old World,' must have everything concerning it on the tip of his tongue, from the entry of Dutch William into London, down to the last Lord Mayor's show. He must, in fact, know everything and everybody. The sylvan nabob was curious, and now he had found to his hand a means of gratifying himself. He was of Scotch extraction, and, like others of the race, could count cousins with the tribe of Benjamin. His man knew them all, or he knew somebody that knew somebody else who did. Meanwhile, the wayfarer gets his cockles warmed, his belly filled, and carouses merrily. In short, he begins to thrive, and 'put up a little flash.' By and bye a cloud of sorrow overshadows the timber palace. News reached the old gentleman, announcing the melancholy demise of a beloved cousin of the fortieth remove but at the bottom of the bitter cup was happily found a qualifying drop of honey—the frugal



lady had left an enormous fortune to her heirs. Here was now something to scramble for. A scramble there must be, and a scramble there was. But in most scrambles there are contentions, bickerings, pullings back, pushings aside, and jumpings forward for the best places, with often a little blackguarding of one another to boot, while the policeman (the law) looks quietly on. The gentleman in blue then steps forward, commands order, reads from a tablet in his hand, and assigns to each individual his proper place, and the game goes on. The prize falls to the lot of one or two, and the unsuccessful competitors are disappointed, and abuse follows. Now, for the first innings; here the northern nabob, or his representative, is on his journey, but arrives on the spot just in the nick of time to be too late. He complains of unfairness, protests against the first bout, and demands the game over again. The policeman bows obedience; the golden die is again cast into the air; a desperate

grab is made, but the former possessors pick it up, and their claims are confirmed. Now, sir, it was at this juncture that you burst into the arena to do the blackguarding, and daringly and unscrupulously have you done it, as many can testify. You first began by vilifying the successful party, by falsely and impudently speaking of a respectable gentleman as an utter impostor, laying to his name acts of forgery, tampering with public records and the like—charges which may be easily put into circulation by venal and malicious tongues against any individual, and which, though even disproved, will find credit with thousands who love scandal and novelty. By means, within your reach, you obtained the gentleman's autograph—in other words, some letter or letters in his hand-writing. Now, here is a secret for your reflection. You submitted the same to me to be copied along with other matter, with which they were supposed to have some connection. I, according to

your instructions, copied what was passed to me, but not without suspecting—nay, discovering—that many of the words therein had been changed, and their purport distorted. Now, sir, look me in the face, and tell me who was here the forger? ‘The greatest rogue cries fastest lie,’ is a Scotch bye-word. It has been said of an eminent lawyer at the bar, that he once declared, if he could only obtain a letter in the handwriting of an accused person, he would engage to convict him. Perhaps you know the secret. But I now come to my main point with you; the most remarkable feature in the whole proceedings. This involves, in the first place, two or three simple questions, which I no longer abstain from putting to you, and which must force themselves upon every one acquainted with your position in the case. Whence comes all this extraordinary zeal, this wonderful assiduity as manifested on your part in the cause? For what good or reasonable purpose under Heaven can you, an

alien, without a drop of blood in your veins in kin with either of the parties in dispute, without a grain of legal knowledge to bless or curse yourself with, and without even the semblance of a right to one fraction of the property in question—nay, further, with no more personal knowledge (by your own showing) of either of the principals than what may be imputed to a stray dog that has accidentally licked the plates for a few times of one of them—have embarked in this novel undertaking?—in a matter, too, that lay a thousand miles out of your obscure path. Such an idea must, indeed, surpass the comprehension of all who have had the curiosity or misfortune to learn your name in this town. True, it may have been, as you profess, that you received a commission (certainly an extraordinary incident in this country, for one in your position), or it may have been that a voluntary overture on your part, with the goodly prospect of ample reward, was accepted for your proffered services,

wonderfully exaggerated in their supposed efficacy. But that you should have made such use or abuse of your introduction into the case by so far exceeding—as you have done—the limits of duty and propriety, by luring your simple ‘chief’ onward stage after stage, through false representations, pretended discoveries and the rest of it, while he, according to your own avowal, would long ago have relinquished the hopeless pursuit must appear to many, as I have said, a mysterious affair. To me, however, who have had the advantage of a private insight into these and other wonderful doings of yours, the mystery is materially lessened, especially when your speculative talents are taken into account. As by a glimpse of sun-light on the morning of a cloudy day, you saw a new field for enterprise opened up before you, you chuckled over it, gazed again, then reasoned thus—‘If I can only continue, by hook or by crook, to prolong the strife—keep up my august master to a fighting pitch, I shall not

only lengthen the term of my lucrative employment (the chousing items into the bargain), but by a little simple tact, familiar to me, I shall continue to quaff Glenlivet, and eat Highland mutton and Lowland beef, at the public expense. Egad! it will do, and friend Swaaps is just the man to help me.' Don't look so fierce and restless, sir, I am just about done with you.

"Nor was this all. By the side of this luxuriant prospect lay a further seam of glittering ore {gold.} To lay your hands upon the tantalising metal became another part of the hopeful enterprise; and, let me add, one worthy of your genius and that of your sleeping colleague, now by your side. The machinery to be employed for the working of this mine was neither very refined nor ingenious. In brief, it amounted to this—could you only worry, persecute, or scandalise, by your fertile inventions, the respectable gentleman in the possession of the prize (otherwise heroically styled by you, 'the

enemy') into a surrender of a goodly pile of current sovereigns, for peace's sake, you would not only seal a truce, but at once raise your siege from his castle, and magnanimously leave him for ever in undisputed possession! Mighty men are you, to be sure! All this going on, too, while you, sir, with the most unblushing impudence, are telling the public that you have resisted various attempts at compromise—rejected, with virtuous scorn, vast bribes, and so forth. But, unfortunately for this prime part of the speculation, 'the enemy' was obstinate—proved himself no craven, and, as far as has transpired (for secrets will creep out), did not even condescend to bestow his scorn upon such contemptible reprobates. One word more, sir—sit down, the door is yet locked. I'll make you hear me to the last. You may laugh. I confess I cannot refrain; and the world, if it only knew the secrets of this mischievous burlesque, would join us in a merry chorus. For what other purpose, let me ask, did you and

your prime minister there lately undertake a journey into the country, and plant yourselves about the outlets of the castle, to waylay the gentleman on his walks? Was it to offer violence to his person? No; you knew a trick worth two of that. It was with the special object of laying at his feet the terms of a 'treaty of peace.' But you were deeply disappointed, even in the hoped-for interview. Well, what followed? I know all. Becoming afraid (and I sympathise with your fears) that your very suspicious appearances there (burglaries were rife at the time) might, if continued, bring you into the hands of the public constable, you very prudently made yourselves scarce—saved your 'habeas corpus,' by a rather hasty and curious retreat over Coldingham moor, with a guilty conscience, in the form of a hound and horseman in pursuit of you. But if this barren diversion in your campaign has been productive of nothing else, it has, at least, put you in a fair way, with the famous March of the Ten



Thousand to immortality, seeing, as we have done this evening, that already your heroic retreat has even glorified the Muses. Only, I take exception, in one instance, to the fidelity of their inspiration, inasmuch as, for the more poetical end of the heroes, they have landed them in a cooling quagmire, instead of conducting them safely back to the High-street or Lawson's Wynd, in Auld Reeky, where, on next day, they put up their mortal appearance. Digest this, sir. I am done with you."

"Once in a dream I met a loon,  
Who kept two clever clerks in town—  
Could beat their master all to sticks,  
At sleight-of-hand or supple tricks.  
He looked a saint, yet, what was strange,  
On them he vowed to take revenge.  
I asked the favour of his name,  
He points below, and nods 'the same.'

"Him next I met, one after day,  
Zigzagging as he clomb a brae;  
And wow! but he was peching!  
He had a lawyer on his back,  
Half-tipsy, half-defiant;  
And by the nape of his coat neck  
Between his teeth his client."

When the young gentleman had finished his speech, Andrew Rutherford, without a moment's pause, very dexterously followed it up with some lines, the substance of which is embodied in the above. But whether his "freend Tam," who, in such scenes, is sadly addicted to the use of his pencil, had any hand in their composition is, as far as their merits go, a matter of perfect indifference to the reader. The door was now speedily unlocked, and, without a syllable in reply, the two discomfited individuals slunk away in a very humiliated plight. At this time, Crox's career in Edinburgh was drawing to a close. He, however, sufficiently imposed upon certain parties, incredible as it would seem, as to obtain permission afterwards to commit a desecration (dig for his sovereign link) upon a human burial-ground, to the great scandal of the parish authorities. Like the spider, having spun his web to the last thread, he at length made a hasty farewell of our Scotch capital, leaving behind

him many sorrowing inquirers. As to our hero, he was so vastly gratified by his evening's entertainment, and especially with the part his clever chaperon had performed, that, on taking his leave, he passed a golden piece into the hand of the worthy man.

## CHAPTER IX.

LORANCE RETURNS TO THE CREELS—RECEIVES  
NEWS, &C.

EARLY on the day following the closing scene in our last chapter, Lorance Langton had an interview of some duration with an old acquaintance. This was none other than his former fellow campaigner in Ling Forest, the “Owner of the Van,” and otherwise associated with some tender and painful reminiscences of bygone years.

By special request Andrew Rutherford had

sought an interview, and desired him to call upon Mr. Langton at the Royal Hotel.

On the vigorous frame of this worthy and eccentric individual the wear and friction of twelve round years of time, as in all weathers he had continued to steadily move within his extensive orbit, had effected no apparent change, save, perhaps, an insignificant diminution in the elasticity of his limbs, together with a visible alteration in the mode of wearing the hair upon his face, which now rendered at a passing glance the recognition of his former familiar features somewhat uncertain. He was, indeed, the real Simon Pure—the Tam Duncan, of the Wig and Gown Supper Tavern—for he preferred the abbreviated and Scotch form of his Christian name, Thomas. Lorange told him of the little device he had on the previous evening employed for the purpose of passing a dull hour, and of getting a sly peep into the tavern, by the adoption of his name; deeming that, of all the Duncans in Scotland, the travel-

ing merchant of early acquaintance was the least likely to turn up and dispute rights with him ; at the relation of which the merchant laughed heartily, rubbing his vast elbows in true former fashion.

Of the Kymes and its former and latter concerns, he had but little to communicate worthy of our report. A new master had taken possession of the estate, and, although an excellent landlord, he was not esteemed by the tenantry equal to his predecessor, their "beloved Colonel." Of Mrs. Keith and her earlier guardian knight he knew nothing beyond a report, stating that the disconsolate widow, in order to assuage the pangs of her late bereavement, had again entered the bonds of matrimony, and that Mr. Andrew Corby had sympathisingly consented to go halves with her in the adventure. He had learnt but little of Miss Grizell Keith, for whose name, lively and affectionate disposition, he cherished a tender regard, save that she had gone to reside with an

aunt near Inverness, who, in the company of her daughter, had taken her abroad where they had remained for some years ; and that after her return she had become engaged to marry an advocate of the Scotch bar named Goodhead. Of the young lady's present residence he was in ignorance, but said, with an air of earnestness, that he would give the best French shawl that had ever been smuggled across the Channel as a wedding gift, if he could only see her face, or know where to find her before the event.

For this laudable purpose Lorange engaged to assist him in the discovery of her whereabouts, and desired an address through which he might be reached by letter in the event of his success. An address being given, the two then parted with a most friendly shake of the hand.

The aforementioned journey to Leith was altogether unproductive of the expected results, and our visitor, having settled his business in Edinburgh, shortly returned to the Creels.

To this rural abode, now associated with some curious and pleasant adventures in the Lammermoors, he had become much attached. The rounded hills in the vicinity, then sparsely inhabited, with its crystal stream and tributaries winding along the verdant valleys, presented to his mind a striking resemblance to some of the classic scenery of Ettrick Forest, without its liability to intrusion by hordes of visitors. His faithful dove, which seemed now to know even the tread of his foot, and especially on hearing his voice at the door, cooed him a welcome on his return. As usual, the post had not forgotten him during his absence, and on his table lay an accumulation of newspapers and letters. Amongst the latter was an epistle from Mr. Sherra, dated from Edinburgh. Its contents were as follows;—

“HONOURED SIR—

“In pursuance of my duty it behoves me now to communicate to you the progress I



have made in the search confided to my trust. So far as my humble labours have gone they have not been unfruitful, and I trust that e'er long they will realise the full harvest of my master's expectations. I have learnt the name of your kinswoman to be Janet Langton, and that she had married an extensive stock farmer in Peeblesshire, a distant kinsman of her own. Also, that shortly after this marriage, owing to a great mortality amongst the stock, and, what was a still greater misfortune, her husband having been cation for a friend to a large amount which come down upon him for payment at the time of the loss, he was crushed under the double load; was, in short, roused off, and left with barely as much means as would carry him to a distant place. He proceeded to Edinburgh with his young wife, whence I have traced them, and here attempted some business, but the enterprise failing, he thence removed to Roxburghshire, and settled near to a town named Kelso, where he is supposed

still to be residing. From this town, by to-morrow's coach, I propose starting to follow up my enquiries, but meanwhile have thought it my duty to advise you of this much in the matter.

“I have the honour to subscribe myself, respected sir, your obedient and humble servant.

“THOMAS SHERRA.”

Lorance perused the contents of his letter with much gratification, and resolved to patiently await the coming of further tidings. On the following day he mounted his horse for a ride to Eyecastle. On approaching the domain he met the Captain with his gun upon his shoulder, two spaniels at his feet and a keeper by his side. They were setting out for a day's cover-shooting.

“I am happy to see you, Mr. Langton,” said the gentleman, with his usual frankness. “I am just going to gather a few out-posts,” he added, “not far hence, and if you will join me your company will enhance the pleasure of the sport.”

“The challenge is very tantalising on so fine a morning,” answered the horseman, “but I am altogether unprepared for such an exploit.”

“Then I go back with you to the house,” said the Captain, turning round upon his heel.

“I cannot allow this,” expostulated the other. “If you persist in your purpose, at the risk of spoiling my new Buckmaster, I shall at once dismount and go with you as I am.”

“Nay, then, you will stay to dinner, and I shall be early home,” said the Captain, yielding.

“To-day, Captain Eyecastle, I cannot accept even these generous conditions,” returned Lorange. “I have ridden over expressly to pay a visit to the ladies. And you know where ladies are, ladies reign, and gentlemen become but subordinate considerations.”

“I understand you perfectly,” said the sportsman; and, after a few further observations, he proceeded to the covers, and the other moved on towards the castle.

Mrs. Eyecastle was "at home," and received her visitor, as was her wont, with a cordial greeting.

"Miss Huntly and Miss Keith," said the lady, "are in the flower-garden, and your old friend, Mr. Goodhead, is doing the gallant, but I will summon them to appear."

In the message a visitor was announced, but the name was not given. Of the party the advocate, bearing a pink rose in his button-hole, was the first to enter the drawing-room, the young ladies having vanished for a moment in their boudoirs. He received the hand of the visitor with a hearty wag, expressing his gratification at finding "their adventurous knight still roving among the hills, despite of all the spells and witchcraft of the Lammermoors." The absent ladies speedily appeared, Miss Huntly foremost, who looked blithe and blooming as a hyacinth in perfection. Miss Keith betrayed a faint start when she entered, and coloured a little as her eyes unexpectedly alighted

upon the figure of her “brother;” and it was only to the nice and discriminating eye that an emotional struggle in her manner became visible, as she assumed the reserve the occasion prescribed. She appeared at once the type of health, and of the spring rose that has not yet received the scorching beams of a midsummer sun; and she now looked all the more interesting because of the slight flush upon her cheek the surprise had called up.

Mrs. Eyecastle, with that amiable forethought often evinced by matron ladies, conceiving properly that Miss Keith might desire a little private conversation with one whose name recalled to her mind so many dear and tender recollections of her childhood, and whose appearance had already contributed so much to her health and spirits, proposed that Miss Huntly and herself should walk to the neighbouring village in order to visit some of her old pensioners, and that the advocate should bear them company. This being grace-

fully carried into effect the two were now left by themselves. The restraint being thus far removed, the young lady now yielded herself up to a flood of tears. She entreated Lorange to forgive her childish weakness, adding that when she saw him she felt herself indeed a child again, with nothing to look back upon but desolation. The loss of her fond father and beloved sister had truly been two severe blows to her heart; but it was equally heartrending to reflect that she had yet a mother without a mother's love and affection, and whom she could not meet as a mother, or otherwise than as one who had shortened the days of her father, and robbed her of a sister's love and life. It was horrible, she avowed, to entertain such thoughts of a parent, but neither time nor prayers could avail in removing them from her mind.

Lorange, who deeply sympathised with her condition—was indeed almost as painfully affected as herself—strove to persuade her that

time and resolution would at least lessen the poignancy of her mental suffering, and expressed a hope that she would endeavour to console herself by admitting and bowing to the mysterious ordination of Providence in the worldly career of the human race.

“Oh! Lorance,” she said, “for you forbid me to call you Mr. Langton, could you only know the strength and depth of a sister’s love—of such a sister as she was to me—you could better comprehend my condition, as I alone silently night and day brood over her image. Keen remorse may be likened to a cancer consuming the heart, but that dear young life, gushing full of love to me, wrenched from me, the torrent of affection suddenly stopped, dammed up for ever by the green sods of the grave, without leaving even a dew-drop to moisten the parched channel in my breast—by hands, too, that ought to have been sanctified in the holy fountain of maternal devotion and tenderness—has left a sleepless, unap-

peasable worm gnawing at my soul that only mocks at my supplications and efforts at forgiveness or forgetfulness."

Her listener was somewhat surprised on perceiving that after the lapse of so many years the sensibilities of the young lady were still so vividly alive to those painful circumstances connected with the death of her sister. He now endeavoured to draw her mind from the subject by inquiring if she had read some books which, on a former occasion, he had named for her perusal. She had consumed them with avidity, not only from the intrinsic merits of the volumes, but also because they had been recommended by her own and her sister Agnes' little Lorry of early and happy days. He next put a question with respect to intended movements after her departure from the castle, to which she replied that her aunt purposed their return to Edinburgh within a fortnight or three weeks, where they should remain but for a short time, thence pro-



ceed either to Inverness or to London for the ensuing winter; but she promised to keep him duly advised in the matter. After a little further conversation their *tête-à-tête* was brought to a close by the return of the lady of the house and her friends.

“Mr. Langton,” said Mrs. Eyecastle, as she entered, “I trust your good nature will excuse me for having left you so much longer than I intended; but if the truth must be told, the fault rests altogether with Mr. Goodhead, who got up such an interesting conversation with the only reputed witch now left us in our parish, that, I protest, if I had not interposed, he would have been fascinated upon the spot, and perhaps transmuted into a milestone by the roadside for the rest of his days.”

“In that case, madame,” said Langton, rising to his feet, “I must congratulate you upon your wonderful escape from such imminent peril. But let me conjure you never to again trust yourself

upon such dangerous ground without previously commanding that your guardian knight shall arm himself with a roantree staff. I myself, ere now, have suffered the consequences of such an omission."

The luncheon time having arrived, the lady desired that the company should adjourn to the dining-room and partake of the ordinary refec-tion. Our visitor was again pressed to stay dinner, but begged to be excused.

When the horseman had passed the gate forming one of the outlets to the demesne of the castle, and had resumed the high road on his way homeward, he began to muse with some seriousness upon the character of the young lady with whom he had just been in conversation. He had observed a vehemence in her sentiments, more especially as they related to her only living parent, which he somewhat regretted. This manifestation he thought, on first view, was irreconcilable in a degree with the disposition, not

only of the gentle, generous, and loving Grizell Keith of early days, but likewise with the character given of the lady by her present hostess. And reasoning in this way, he saw that one so full of ardent affection, with now no living member of her family, save a mother, to bestow it upon, or share of its richness; and that all this wealth of the heart, with its due portion of filial love, should have been so turned away from its natural course, so utterly alineated from that bosom that suckled her, that parent that smiled upon her unconscious infancy—at least, such is to be assumed—appeared to him indeed, a paradox in nature, a phenomenon that staggered his philosophy. But turning to the obverse of the picture, he readily found a key to the mystery.

On tracking backwards her footsteps to her nursery days, he recollected the state of her young life. It was about the very dawn of her unconscious existence, he discovered that a cold stone had been cast into the infant current of

her warm affections, and that, as with the tendrils of the young vine, while they strove to surmount the obstacle, to lift up their feeble arms and entwine themselves around it, they were chilled to the core, and left to languish without maternal nurture. So then, as the flower turns to the sun that gives heat and vitality to its stem, the child turned round to its father and caressing sister, and there abundantly found what it had vainly sought for elsewhere. The young heart deriving its genial nourishment from these inexhaustible sources, welling up and overflowing with holy love, it waxed in strength, grew in years, and turned not therefrom again in quest of the ice bound spring that had never been opened to it. To this again must be added her vivid recollection, her agonised consciousness that that mother had been the cruel and remorseless instrument in depriving her of these paternal and sisterly springs of love. Therefore, as the child cannot love the wolf that devoured the

lamb she had fondled, so Grizell Keith cannot love, however she may strive to forget and forgive, the destroyer of all her pride and earthly happiness ; she cannot bestow her love upon the wolf that was due to the lamb, she cannot transfer her love to her mother without proving false to the graves of those who alone in life lavished the full bounty of their hearts upon her.

“ Angelic daughter of love and nature !” he ejaculated, as he concluded his inquiry. “ Hard has been your lot, and is your life-long task, I fear ; but I have solved the problem to your inestimable worth and devotion.”

With which he dropped his whip upon the mane of his horse and quickened his pace ; as he moved onward however, a further idea flashed across his mind.

“ By the way,” he muttered to himself, “ did I not hear Duncan, the travelling merchant, say that Miss Grizell Keith had become engaged to marry an advocate, named Mr. Goodhead ? I

now think I did. Well, if my friend at the castle be the fortunate gentleman referred to, he may well bless his stars. I think I ought to congratulate—but—but how should I reconcile—reconcile to the loss of my adopted sister, almost the image of my beautiful Agnes, and to whom she was so devotedly attached? I must stir in this. Go on, horse, and mind your footing among these broken stones,” he added, starting from the subject, whereupon he struck out and trotted home.

## CHAPTER X.

## CONCERNING AN ELECTION.

WHEN Lorance Langton had returned from his morning ride, he was informed that two gentlemen had called upon him in his absence. One of them was his honest friend, Robin Rawburn ; the other was a stranger, a professional member of the law, belonging to the town of ——. It deserves now to be noticed that at this period, as has elsewhere been intimated, the United Kingdom was upon the eve of a general election,

and that the opposing political parties had already begun to bestir themselves in anticipation of the great struggle impending. The Whigs and Radicals of the provincial towns, taking their cue from those of the mercantile and manufacturing cities, were now exerting themselves with characteristic zeal, to either severally carry their elections, or unite their forces for the overthrow of their ancient foes, the great Tory lords of the country, who, reposing placidly upon the strength of their broad acres, were viewing these movements with small dismay, if not absolute contempt.

Numerous feelers or emissaries from those small towns had been sent into the agricultural districts to there take soundings, and, when opportunity offered, remove the political film from the eyes of the purblind farmers. But voters are no more essential for elections than are eligible candidates for the supreme honours; and with many of our vestal boroughs money is a very



qualifying ingredient in a candidate. It has a wonderful power in inspiring faith amongst weavers, shoemakers, and other well-to-do burghesses; and when, as it will happen, these good and loyal citizens, casting their eyes about them in election emergencies, cannot find a man amongst their body quite up to their weight—for the political race is to be ridden only with heavy weights—they, with a natural instinct, turn their attention elsewhere to select an aspirant to fit their book. In this, as our civil history has occasionally exemplified, liberal constituencies have had their own difficulties to contend with. It was even so at this advent; and a certain unforeseen occurrence had cast the “free and independent electors of ——” into a very awkward predicament. They had suddenly become disappointed of their “man.” Singular as it must seem, and by as singular an incident, the name of Lorange Langton had reached the ears of the election committee in their present exigency, and

had been therein represented to them as an Englishman of great wealth, and consequently of ambitious aspirations. From some private acts of generosity and benevolence imputed to him in his sojourn in Scotland, vastly exaggerated by his own account, the members had thought him a "fit and proper person to represent their interests in the government of the country"—this without, as it appeared, deeming it necessary to first learn his political catechism, probably relying on the old popular maxim that princes who want thrones and men who desire seats in parliament have but little to do with catechisms or principles—and, notwithstanding the great distance, they had despatched a gentleman to "wait upon him." But as the "fit and proper person" happened to be absent at the time a letter was left for him, desiring that he would do them the honour to allow his name to be put upon the list as a candidate in the Liberal interest, for their suffrages in parliament. This professional

individual had known Robin Rawburn through some law business he had transacted for him, and learning that the worthy yeoman was not only acquainted with, but favourably esteemed by Langton, he, while no more befitting medium was at command, had been chosen a chaperon for the introduction. But it is only due to state that, in accepting this office, his obliging disposition had more to do in the matter than any sympathy with the cause. For his interests lying entirely with the pastoral and agricultural products of the soil, he dreaded even the name of Radical or Reformer, as he dreaded the murrain amongst his cattle.

When Lorange had read the gentleman's letter, which was neatly and tersely framed, with the usual stock phrases for the occasion, he could not refrain from a hearty round of laughter, the more especially when he had compared in his own mind its purport with that contained in a former missive which he had received on the same spot,

at the hands of one Adam Webster, of an earlier acquaintance.

“At all events,” said he, within himself, “my name seems to be rising among these hills; and if I do not promptly reply I shall be having a deputation waiting upon me at the cost of the next candidate’s sinews of election. What next?” he continued. “I have been sought for as a London publisher, as a prince belonging to the royal blood of the tribe of Egypt, and now as an ‘honourable candidate for the ancient borough of ——;’ perhaps already declared the coming man! Well! well! I can see but another step higher to ascend between this and the halter. Who knows that some of the old mad Jacobite blood may not take it into their heads to bring me forward as a third pretender for the defunct throne of the house of the Stuarts, and thereby bring my days to an untimely end on the gallows? Beshrew my star, with her smirking, twinkling, innocent looking face, if I can comprehend her!

Why can't she let me enjoy my ease in mine inn? pursue my innocent humours among these wild valleys, after my own fashion?"

When he had thus given vent to this pleasantry he sat down and penned a letter to the committee, thanking the gentlemen for the high honour they had conferred upon him by the proposal contained in the letter with which he had been favoured; but assured them that he was neither by profession nor taste a politician, and, consequently, must gratefully decline to have himself put in nomination on their books.

After breakfast on the following day, Lorance rode over the moor to Mr. Rawburn's farm.

He found the sturdy yeoman without his coat, and busily occupied with some of his labourers in his haggard. He soon hastened to his visitor, and pressed him to dismount.

But the other preferred to have a little chat in the saddle.

After a few ordinary remarks, Lorance ex-

pressed his regret that he was not at home on the previous day, to give an audience to him and his electioneering friend.

“I wasna sae sorry mysel’, Mr. Langton, as ye would maybe think,” answered the dealer in kyloes, with a good-humoured smile; “for, to tell the truth, I didna muckle like the errant; only the lawyer body, who had heard something of you, asked me if I would ride over with him to the Creels, and I didna like to refuse him. As to your politics, I told him I could not say what they were.”

“His mission and letter have afforded me much amusement,” said Lorange; “but, as you had probably anticipated, I have declined the proffered honours, with my grateful thanks.”

The other expected as much; he then said,

“But, Mr. Langton, as ye hae now seen a little o’ our country manners in baith Kirk and Court, ye would, maybe, like a bit keek at yin o’ our Scotch elections, without booin’ from the front o’

a platform ; and, for fear of anything waur happenin' sir, if you would allow me the honour o' your company, to one where there's expected to be some sharpish wark wi' the tongue, I would be very glad to fill the place of Johnny Dods on that day on my white horse."

"When and where is it to come off, Mr. Rawburn?"

"Exactly four days from the day, at eleven o'clock," he answered ; "and it takes place in a neighbouring county, where I hae a sma' farm, and a vote for the member."

"I shall be delighted to put myself under your safe convoy, Mr. Rawburn," said Lorance, expressing his thanks for the proposition.

Whereupon, it was arranged that the two should meet, and proceed thither in an open phaeton, to be hired by the latter for the occasion.

The sun, on the morning of the election-day, rose with propitious omen, and Mr. Rawburn, having suggested that they should

take time by the forelock, as they had a long journey before them, they each made an early breakfast, and sallied forth under the care of a steady driver and swift-footed horse.

In politics they were both Conservatives, or Tories, as the phrase then went; and the farmer now proved himself more of a spirited partisan than his companion had anticipated.

On their way Robin gave the other a brief sketch of the character of the two opposing candidates.

One, he said, represented the high aristocratic interest of the county. The other, from a desire to have his name associated with those of the old exclusive families, had professed formerly the same tenets; but being restless and ambitious, as appeared, and finding that in that direction he could not possibly ascend beyond the lowermost branches of that august tree—that, in fact, he could never become more than *nullus* amongst the patricians, he conceived the clever notion, that by



changing his creed, he might become Cæsar among the plebeians, and so in that capacity he is this day to cross the Rubicon, and mount the hustings.

We are here, of course, giving the substance of the discourse without the northern idioms.

Lorance enquired if the gentleman was a popular man or orator.

“Had the wise or benignant star, which the learned men speak of,” he replied, “only got forward in time before Will-o’-the-wisp had arrived to rock his infant cradle, he might have been both, for aught I can tell. But, at the nativity, unfortunately for the little babby, the sedate planet was forestalled by that roving meteoric scamp of our bogs, who, on the right of priority, persisted in standing sponsor at his christening, and of presiding over the training and education of the youth, whereby he imparted a singular warp to his brain, which has since developed all the frisking, frolicksome instability of the

Lantern school, and from which characteristics he has acquired among his friends the nick-name of Supple Davy. He therefore possesses few of the qualities of a popular man, or yet of a stump orator, albeit his big aspirations in that way; for whenever he gets up to speak—and in assemblies he will have have his word in: indeed, it were death to poor Davy to prevent him from making a guy of himself — his tongue, bounding away on the loose, gets so far ahead of his little wits, that he is constantly falling foul of everything and everybody that comes in his way, while in his headlong splutter, the clever lads of the press are having rare sport of it in tripping up his heels among the verbs and pronouns of Lindley Murray. Still, Supple Davy is not without one supreme attribute of a stump orator. He is as insensible to affront as he is to blushes, and in the riot or rowdyism of his utterances he loses all conception of the feeling of others, or even the respect

which is due to his own kinsfolk. Nay, in his little throes of excitement, together with the bickerings of his meteoric upper-story, he will scatter personal insults around him, assail the private character of an unoffending neighbour or family, if it were only to obtain a vulgar grin or a momentary triumph; and then, with an unspeakable coolness and hardihood peculiar to himself, he will summon up one of his best smiles and swagger up to them next day as if nothing had happened—as if it were all a joke, a mere matter of course. For such humorous eccentricities poor Davy has often had the door slammed in his face; still, the snubbed and swaggering body does not seem to grow the wiser for it. Such things keep him under notice, and to be noticed is homage to his self-glorification, and that is worth money, and more than friendship to him. But his friends ought in charity to bear with him, for then he is scarcely to be held responsible for his own actions.

“So much for his idea of popularity as a public speaker. Now, his notions of popularity as a country gentleman savour of something equally anomalous in their way. Supple Davy maintains a liberal board, which is in itself, to say the least of it a redeeming quality, and, with many, will cover a multitude of shortcomings. He is a huntsman, keeps a fair stud, and in the hunting field, as in other assemblies, is fond of prominence, though not in the van of the ‘pinks.’ He rides ‘indifferent well,’ and next to the tongue of the hounds, and perchance that of the huntsman, his screaming or blustering voice is commonly heard the loudest. Upon his tongue-end he has in readiness more ‘D——n ye, sirs, is that the way to ride at hounds?’ ‘Why don’t you do this?’ ‘Why don’t you do that?’ &c., &c., than are to be heard in any ten hunting fields in the kingdom. Davy, to be fashionable, is fond of paintings, and takes unto himself a peculiar pride in showing his little store to all comers. He is also an

agricultural man, is fond of prominence at cattle shows and other agricultural meetings, where he commonly delivers himself, to the diversion of shrewd bystanders. He is a patron of all improvements in husbandry; is a breeder of fine stock, and avows therefrom a liberality to such farmers or neighbours as may require to improve their breed. Now herein lies another of the gentleman's peculiar jokes, which again illustrates the suppleness of his character, and the case may be accepted as one of the many.

“At one of those gatherings he meets two respectable farmers. He is affable, and condescends to inquire their names, and where their farms are situated. They answer accordingly. One lives fifteen, the other twenty miles from Suppledale, his pleasant residence. He next inquires after their crops, and what kind of stock they keep upon their lands. He suggests a change or cross in the breed, and invites them to Suppledale to see his shorthorns and prize Leicesters. He

names a day on which he will be at home. They proceed thither. He receives them hospitably, conducts them into the house, and there is no lack of wine and other good things for their refreshment. He is gracious, and shows them his paintings; summarises the history of a few, and pardons one of them for prematurely turning his eyes away from the portrait of his loving spouse and fixing them upon that of a prize bull of his own rearing. He next accompanies them over some pastoral fields, drops in upon his stud and stables, and finally lands them in a small paddock, wherein ten young rams are reposing. Their copious wool, their thin ears and symmetry of parts, are variously descanted upon. Five of them bear crimson marks behind the ears; these are destined for some great people.

The farmers, of course, admire them amazingly, though sensible that they have seen many better with less said about them. But to their further amazement, if not absolute confusion, with the

next breath of their owner, they find they are each made a present of one of the remaining five, to improve their home stock.

“The simple and unsuspecting men are overwhelmed by this princely act of generosity. But it is useless to refuse him; he is in the habit of doing such things, and they have only to choose a convenient day to send for their sheep. This being settled, he will now leave his visitors with his shepherd to put a mark upon their choice, whereupon he turns round, shakes them heartily by the hand, and proceeds to the house. The ceremony of marking is gone through, the shepherd receives two liberal fees, and the farmers drive off in their gig, discoursing favourably of their benefactor.

“On their way homeward they meet with a friend, to whom they make due report of their day’s luck. He breaks out into a fit of laughter, at which they are at first a little offended; but he soon puts them right by explaining the cause. He tells them that within the last two or

three years he has known not less than half a dozen instances in which farmers have been honoured and treated in a similar manner at Suppledale. But always when they sent for their presents their carts happened to return as empty as when they went. The gifted ewes or rams were never forthcoming. The bailiff, who was a partner in his master's cheat, had only the same tale to repeat to each applicant, viz.—‘Master’s compliments, and regrets the disappointment, but at the time of the interview he was not aware, or had quite forgotten, that the rams had been all previously promised, but hopes the gentleman will be more fortunate next year, by applying before all the draughts are disposed of.’”

When the farmers heard this they looked curiously at one another, then joined their friend in another hearty laugh, and at once came to the determination to be no further fooled by Supple Davy.

With the hope of making some amends to the



reader for the length of the above digression on our way to the scene of general attraction, we will now at once conduct him into a large court-room in front of the platform, where sit the sheriff of the county and sundry other gentlemen, interested no doubt in the day's proceedings. Confronting this select body, and seated upon a series of forms, is an assemblage of from two to three hundred orderly and sedate-looking persons, consisting of husbandmen, in their Sunday coats; respectable farmers, freshly shaved; village artisans and other rural tradesmen, all in very clean faces—not even excepting the blacksmiths and cobblers. Glancing back and scanning more closely the platform, we discover thereon some of the “flower of the aristocracy.” They have the ease and manners of well-bred gentlemen. One of them, modestly seated in a corner, is the Conservative candidate. On the other side, and conspicuously placed on a chair, sits his dauntless opponent, yet, withal, on very good behaviour,

and, in person, apparently well got-up for the occasion. His morning toilet had been made with scrupulous care; his smooth and clean chin bear testimony to the edge of the razor and the nice hot water. His countenance is lively and brisk, and his face is of the oblong cast, not censoriously, but physically or mathematically speaking. In short, it may be symbolized to the reader in the familiar form of a fiddle, shortened a little by a squeeze, with a fresh touch of varnish upon it: the nose representing the bridge, and a longitudinal fissure on either cheek the air-slits. For the slight flush upon his countenance—and it is really astonishing what trivial things, as looks and gestures in great men, give rise to public speculation—two causes have been assigned. But the most natural, we think, is his morning ride under the bracing air, while another version points to a totally different reason, namely, being recognised on his way to the hustings, he was saluted, not quite in the terms of

the northern witches upon the "blasted heath," but after the fashion of some street boys, tuning their voices to the words of "See, the Conquering Hero comes," under the excitement of which he accidentally dropped a shilling. But as we have the latter on the authority of friend Rawburn, who, in politics—we honestly confess it—as we have discovered, is not altogether free of the common laven of prejudice, we therefore, after the manner of discreet reporters, suggest that it be received with reserve.

After the usual preliminaries upon election occasions had been gone through by the sheriff, the Conservative candidate was duly proposed. The gentleman then left his chair, and, advancing to the front of the boards, addressed the audience. He was received with the ordinary demonstrations of approval and disapproval of a mixed multitude.

We here abstain from personal comment, as there was nothing in his appearance to distin-

guish him from the ordinary standard of a mild, well-bred, well educated gentleman. He commenced his speech by reviewing, in temperate terms, the political condition of the empire, commenting, as he proceeded, upon the prosperity of British commerce, the flourishing state of agriculture, despite of sundry legislative disadvantages, and animadverted, with some point, on certain inconsistencies in the acts of a previous government, which, he said, had entailed grievous hardships upon the home-producers of that wealth and stability upon which the pillars of the nation were stedfastly based. Discoursing at large upon some of the recent popular measures and movements in Parliament, he pointed out wherein he approved and wherein he withheld his approval; and, referring to certain revolutionary schemes and local agitations in the country, he cautioned the people against placing their faith in such wild and mischievous delusions; and finally entreated them to return to

the House of Commons such tried men as had hitherto secured their confidence, and who had their civil and domestic interests at heart. At the conclusion of the address there was a round of hearty cheers, but not without an admixture of counter hisses.

We now pass directly on to the next candidate, who, according to sanguine expectation in a certain quarter, is this day to perform on our platform the part of a local lion, among the tribes, for every country town or village has its lion, as well as its street dog; and we are assured that this novel lion, like Peter Quince's in the play, will roar "until the Duke will say —Let him roar again."

The reader will then be pleased to understand that he has now, drawn up to his full height before him the hospitable Lord of Suppledale.

"Gentlemen, — Free, intelligent, and independent electors of the county of ——, I now appear before you, to solicit the honour of your

support as a Liberal candidate, to represent your suffrages in the British House of Parliament."

There seemed to be something catching—nay, more, almost approaching to the sublime, in the tone in which these opening words were expressed, the beauty of which the gentleman's friends seemed at once to thoroughly comprehend, for they immediately called out "hear! hear!" and, altogether, they appeared to have a reassuring and refreshing effect upon them.

"But, gentlemen, emboldened as I am in thus appearing before you as an advocate for your rights and independence, I must, at the same time, confess myself seriously impressed with the disadvantages under which I have to labour. In an assembly, such as I have now the honour of addressing, I am well aware there are men who, in the philosophy of politics, differ as widely from myself as are the poles of this globe asunder—men indeed of different shades of opinion in all

things, of different interests ; who hear things, who see things, and judge of things after an approved or confirmed fashion of their own ; and who naturally regard any change or innovation in the systems around them, whatever may be their intrinsic merits, with a quick jealousy and even prejudice. Of this, the history of the world, in its progress onward, from the dark days of barbarism and feudal tyranny up to the present enlightened age we live in, has sufficiently exemplified. Yet, and it is marvellous, in these improving times, there are men with all the advantages of education, all the opportunities of learning the practical lessons daily laid before them, who still seek to impress their obsolete and antiquated doctrine upon the present generation. In the gentleman who has just preceded me in soliciting your suffrages, we have a convenient illustration of this deplorable fact. (Hear, hear, and hisses). In his speech, my honourable opponent has not merely identified himself

with that class, but with remarkable frankness, after insinuating that only men of his school can have your welfare sincerely at heart, has exhorted you to continue steadfast in your faith, and, above all things, to beware of men and measures not strictly in accordance with his political formula. Now, I for one deny that your individual welfare or the prosperity of this great nation, whereby I mean the greatest of our British institutions—the institutions of agriculture and commerce—with the latter I connect our manufacturing and mining interests—are in safe keeping in the hands of the Tories. Our civil reforms and improvements have never come amongst us from that quarter. What now, I will ask you, had been the condition of the farmers of this county, with their present high rents, without the recent changes or reforms in the system, and the introduction of improved implements in husbandry? Let us but compare the present aspect of our teeming fields, with the



dismal prospect they must have presented to the eye a century ago! Who will then say there has been no need of change? Even so it is with political economy. Who can visit one of our annual cattle shows, and not feel amazed at the wonderful bullocks therein exhibited — the noble horses, and the vast improvement in our sheep?”

“Aye, man, ye’re the fellow for improvin’ the sheep stock among the farmers aroond ye,” ejaculated a voice in the crowd, ironically, creating great laughter.

“Put a wisp of straw in that calf’s mouth,” retorted the gentleman, promptly.

But the smart repartee, although it had the effect of saving him his ground, was not original.

Surveying his assemblage, he resumed —

“Of the noblest animals of the world, the most beneficial to the human race, we ask ourselves, whence has all this come? What numerous changes and successive stages of improvement

must the enterprising producers not have gone through before such perfection in the different breeds had been arrived at? With such a prize, such a vast reward for their industry in their profession, we ask, what will they now do? Will they stand still, and let the world of science, of art, and of commerce get ahead of them, as certain political preachers may advise them to do? Will they advance onward and sustain their honours in the universal contest? Or will they ignobly surrender them, and adopt a retrograde movement,—go back to mediæval or oligarchal times, those glorious days of Torydom—return to her timber era of wooden ploughs, wooden platters, and wooden spoons?”

There was something so egregiously absurd in this sudden turn in the speech, in this far-fetched stone, cast at the head of his opponent, that the applause and laughter which followed the last words, might have fairly borne two very opposite interpretations.

Continuing—

“But I am addressing an agricultural constituency, and I wish to illustrate my principles by examples familiar to us all, as taken from our fields and our stalls.”

“Hear, hear! I applaud ye there, Maister Davy, for ye’re maist at hame among the nowt beasts, like mysell,” cried Robin Rawburn, with comical gravity.

These words created an outburst of merriment throughout the assembly, alike among the friends and adversaries of the speaker; nor was the sheriff himself, despite his efforts to the contrary, altogether proof against their effects. Indeed, judging by countenances, the interruption appeared to meet with a general relish, probably from a hope that it would bring the gentleman to speak more directly on the points expected, for they had already begun to show some signs of impatience with his pompous and wandering remarks, some of which had been

neither in the best of taste nor quite to the purpose of an election. The diversion, however, had the further effect, but not without cries for order, and some objections, of eliciting a few pertinent observations from another gentleman.

“I am a member of that agricultural constituency,” he said, “to which our present candidate has so triumphantly alluded; and I, with many others, have come here to-day, for the purpose of receiving some enlightenment in the new and fickle way of politics. But, I begin to fear that fortune is against me, for, so far as our time has been occupied, I feel myself none the wiser for my pains. Indeed, nothing new whatever has been tendered to us, except, perhaps, that of a certainty, it seems, awaiting us, of which I was ignorant when I left my home, viz., that if we do not give our votes to the Liberal gentleman, but place our suffrages in the hands of a Conservative member, we shall all inevitably be carried back to what he has rather wittily

designated (I relish wit in dull moments, even though it be of the ligneous order) the Timber era—a new term for a cycle in our history—when we shall have to again eat degenerate beef, on wooden plates, and ply our brose with wooden spoons (much laughter). But with respect to the gentleman's remarks on the cattle show—and therein, by carrying our attention thither, I think, whatever may have been his intended deductions, he was most unfortunate in his line of policy—I will make bold to shorten matters there, by at once submitting to the tribunal of common sense, two or three simple queries—To what or to whom is the country indebted for these wonderful changes in our soil and improvements in our home stock, to which the gentleman so exultingly alludes? Is it to foreign bounty, to that promiscuous sect of politicians seen waving their banners in distant parts, to the tramp of 'We come, we come,' calling themselves Whigs, Reformers, Radicals, and, God knows

what!—men often found without so much property as a kale-yard, wherein to grow for themselves a dish of beans!—or is it to the Conservative landowners of this county? for there are no Whig landlords of great report amongst us. Who has drained our lands? Who has converted our barren wastes into luxuriant fields? Who has improved our cottagers' dwellings? Who has erected our costly farm houses, with their extensive and substantial sets of offices, which, as agricultural tenements for man and beast, are the wonder and admiration of all strangers and foreigners who visit them? I will spare further pain; I delight not in torture; and, so, for an answer to these simple questions, I will refer our honourable candidate to the first hind's maiden he sees in the next turnip field."

The taste or passion for electioneering, especially if stimulated by the dream of a seat in Parliament, runs very strong with certain individuals. It was even so with our present can-

didate. And although the somewhat hard hitting or damaging remarks of the last speaker might have been thought of themselves sufficient to shake the firmness, if not altogether discomfit a stronger man than himself, on his political legs, yet, he stood his ground lustily, and like Hector, bore his wounds—or Hudibras, his drubs—with exemplary fortitude. He possessed that inestimable advantage which, in a round at quarter-staff, is half the battle—of being neither very sensitive nor thin-skinned, and he took his bangs with the contempt of a true British lion; but, by the way, where these royal quadrupeds are bred in Britain we have not the least conception, except it be in some artist's studio, or the brains of an humble writer like ourselves, hard up for a simile to enliven a dull line.

“I am not,” he said, with energy, though evidently perplexed—“I am not in the least degree sorrowful, though I regret the interruption, that the gentleman has given me a proof of

his lively attention to my remarks, and that he has so far anticipated me in the honest tribute I was about to pay to many of the leading gentry of this country, who differ from me in our political views—”

“What about the Torydom tyranny and wooden spoons?” again shouted a voice. Cries for order, and hisses.

“I will not be put down, though you should interrupt me till sunset; and I trust that my Tory friends—and I have many personal ones in this assembly—will do me the justice to distinguish with myself between a grave statement, and what is simply meant for a jest.”

“A cheild may hang an unruly wife, an’ ca’d a jest; but will he get ony man of commo’ sense t’ believe him?” uttered another man in the crowd.

There were now some indications of uproar, which, however, were speedily suppressed by the sheriff, and, tranquillity being restored, the gen-



tleman again resumed. It is not our intention to follow him farther, this not being a place for a political harangue. On the outset of this day, we simply contemplated to accompanying the subject of our narrative to the hustings, in order that he might gratify himself with a "peep" at a Scotch election, in which, however, he found, as expected, nothing very different from those between rival candidates elsewhere. True, the Liberal candidate, without any claim to those immunities commonly conceded to ambitious youth (for the gentleman was well stricken in years), had not, we think, sufficiently weighed his qualifications as a discreet or conciliating orator, for the critical post he had aspired to on the public platform in the presence of a shrewd people, composed of some high-toned, highly accomplished gentry. But ardently pursuing his purpose, he tore away, floundering on to the end, as we were afterwards informed, losing his temper among the logicians, and bespattering every one with

the soil of his tongue who appeared an obstacle to his onward course.

Yet, with all his untoward eccentricities, incredible as it may seem, he carried the election. He was a new man, and the tradesmen and artisans of the county towns had imbibed new notions ; and being amply plied with fair promises, which they prized more than English grammar or delicate sentiments, they mustered a preponderance of votes and returned him to parliament ; wherein, however, to his credit be it spoken, acting upon wise counsel no doubt, he has never been known to utter more than the harmless monosyllables of hear, hear, aye or no, or to make a motion in the House, except to use his *mouchoir*, and once to wag hands with the premier.

## CHAPTER XI.

MR. SHERRA AND MRS. COCKBURN AT THE CREELS.

WHILE Lorance Langton thus continued to occupy himself with his little adventures among the hills at home, Mr. Sherra was energetically prosecuting his enterprise abroad. He had traced his heroine with her husband, from Kelso to her present place of abode. In his announcement to this effect, however, probably from a desire to confer upon his employer an agreeable surprise, he did not in his letter signify the express local-

ity, but contented himself with simply stating that it was within an easy day's ride from the Creels. To Lorance these tidings were of themselves sufficiently gratifying, especially as they were accompanied by a promise that the gentleman would speedily appear in person to render to his master an account of his labours, together with the "surplus of cash," as he phrased it, remaining in his hands; for the school-master was a frugal traveller and an exact book-keeper.

About noon on the second day from the date of his communication, Mr. Sherra was announced at the Creels. He was desired to be conducted into the room where Lorance was then seated, but returned a message to the effect that he would prefer in the first instance, if convenient, to have a word with Mr. Langton at the door, as he was not alone.

Lorance immediately rose and proceeded to the door, and to his surprise, saw in his company a

woman and child, whose features he at once recognised. By the side of the schoolmaster stood Janet Cockburn, neatly dressed, holding in her right hand the little boy, who has already appeared as a juvenile hero in our preceding pages—the lost or stolen child. Mrs. Cockburn dropped a neat courtesy when she saw her former benefactor, and the child stood with his cap in his hand.

Their chaperon soon explained the circumstances under which they then appeared before him. The lady proved to be none other than the daughter of his kinsman, John Langton, of whom he had been in search. Lorance looked with astonishment, but immediately shaking her affectionately by the hand, as also his former little acquaintance, conducted them directly into his room. Within a few seconds more they were all seated down together, while Mr. Sherra proceeded to explain, in very distinct terms, the genealogical tree of Janet Cockburn, such as he had received

from her own lips and attested by family records. The account was simple, but admitted of no question whatever on the point of consanguinity.

It was indeed a happy discovery—a happy day for Lorance, who, ever since the death of his father and kinswoman, Miss Murray, clinging in his heart to the land of his ancestors, had mourned deeply the loss of all knowledge of his paternal relations, far removed as these might be. He now felt a warmer glow passing through his veins.

“Mrs. Cockburn,” he said, addressing her, “so your christian name is Janet?—it is a favourite one with me. Indeed, for generations past it has been so with our family, and I am happy to think that your branch has entertained the same love for it. My paternal grandmother’s name was Janet, and my mother’s name was Janet, though only half a Scotchwoman. Indeed,” he added, with a smile, “such was my late poor father’s veneration for it, that I do

believe it had something to do with him in the choosing of a wife. I have in my recollection some lines which he once addressed to her, when in her prime, on an occasion when she was habited in a light dress for a public ball, in India.

“If Luna, chaste, serene, and bright,  
Looks envious on each other planet,  
What will the goldess say to-night,  
When she beholds her rival Janet?”

Mrs. Cockburn blushed in a smile. She was herself now, as a wife, in her prime, and though frugally but tastefully dressed, she presented a face, form, and hand which many a court beauty might have envied. He became very chatty with her, and complimenting her as a sample, declared that, to the best of his knowledge, he had never seen a plain woman of the name of Janet; alleging that there must be something in the five letters, when so combined, favourable to good looks, and added, humorously, that if he were a

parent, and had as many daughters as there were days in the week, they should all be Janets, except from the fear of thereby causing some slight domestic perplexities, and probably leading to some mistakes among their sweethearts. He then addressed himself to the little boy; took him by the hand, and enquired his name.

“Jamie,” he answered, diffidently.

“Well, Jamie,” said the other, folding something up in a piece of paper and passing it, “here is a present for you, but you must not look at it now. But I have another question to ask you—Have you, my little rover, forgiven me for the great fright I caused to you in the wild wood upon the Watch, and for having deprived you of your affectionate dove?”

“Oh! yes, sir; I have both,” answered the boy, gathering courage, “for I will never go to get lost again; and I am certain to get another young cushy next year, if I can get any one to go to the woods with me.”



“Would you accept my company?” proposed Lorance.

“Can you speel (climb) a tree?”

“I once could.”

“Where did you learn, sir?”

“In the Highlands, when I was a few years older than you are now.”

While this brief prattle was going on the eyes of the little fellow were frequently directed towards the corner of the room, in which sat upon her rustic perch the dove above referred to. Indeed, since he entered, they had scarcely been withdrawn from her; but now, having apparently made sure in the recognition of his voice, the bird commenced a round of her soft notes, which had the effect of at once silencing the company. He was now requested to approach her, which in his heart he seemed longing to do. As he did so, the bird, instead of exhibiting her usual signs of fear towards strangers, now suddenly changed her tones, and, raising her head, brought it grace-

fully downwards, pressing her breast upon her feet while she elevated her train to a considerable height, and in this manner, alternating her attitudes, she continued, with her eyes fixed upon his face, cooing for several seconds without intermission, and when he withdrew she returned to her former note—the call for her mate, as commonly heard in our woodlands.

Having desired for his visitors such impromptu refreshments as the house then afforded, Lorance turned round and took from his desk a bank note of considerable value, which he presented to Mrs. Cockburn, promising at the same time to pay her a visit on an early day, which he named, and requested that her husband should be retained at home to be present on the occasion. He next addressed a few words to Mr. Sherra, again thanking him earnestly for his excellent services, but declined to accept from that gentleman the proffered “surplus” of his expenditure, alleging, humorously, that he had not then leisure

enough to examine his book of entries. He, however, desired him to embrace the first convenient opportunity for returning to the Creels, where he wished to hold some further counsel with him. He did so, and on that occasion returned to Kittlenaket a richer man than he had been for some years past.

Contemplating to shortly take his leave of his solitary inn, Lorance lost no time in redeeming his promise to visit Mrs. Cookburn, whom he found with her husband and little boy, living in a humble, but comfortable, thatched cottage, consisting of three apartments. They appeared an affectionate couple, for love will nestle as fondly under a thatched roof as within the walls of a golden palace. They had two children—boys; the elder had gone to a neighbouring farmer, distantly related to the husband, to remain there for a time as a companion to their only son, with some daughters. But though in a tolerable position, and occupying an extensive

tract of land, this family was neither very elevated, nor very refined in their sentiments, and they used the boy often in the capacity of a menial, to herd their cattle and the like. As we proceed here, it may not be unprofitable to mark the vicissitudes in life in this relationship. The farmer's family have all been reduced to the humbler occupations of industry, while that boy is now a distinguished and learned member of one of our English universities.

The amount of John Cockburn's material interests at this time consisted in an only cow, a few sheep, the yearly tenure of a few acres of poor land, a kale yard, a cottage and cow-house; but taste and frugality were everywhere marked within the small scope of their premises, and seemed to combine in carrying a cheering gleam of homely comfort around their fire of rude turf. But our nobler virtues, though often severely tested, seldom fail under the mysterious dispen-

sation of our good and evil lot, to attain, in the long run, their due reward. This, too, often at a time when least expected—when the gathering clouds are darkest, the pulse of hope at its lowest. At such a conjunction in human life, when prosperity and adversity meet hand to hand in a desperate conflict on the brink of a precipice—when the two gigantic foes, after buffeting loose and wide, close with each other, and are tugging and swaying to and fro upon an even poise of strength or weight, what a slight touch from an external hand will send the one or other into the gulph below ! So it is in the toils of fortune with most of us. When genuine worth and industry, though feeble in foot, combine and join hand in hand in the struggle, what small help imparted at the turning point, will send them triumphantly onward to the goal.

On his visit to this couple, Lorance Langton soon foresaw, and afterwards realised, the force of this moral ; although, it is but just to observe,

our first picture of strife contains lines of a stronger shade than what actually represented the condition of this family. Real poverty or want had never been allowed to enter their habitation. The vigorous muscles and energetic character of the husband had set either at defiance. Still, contrasted with their visitor's own affluent means, and the former social position of his kinswoman's ancestors, it made a touching appeal to his fervent and generous heart; nor did he require another tongue to plead their cause for them. From that hour their scale, as held in hands of fate, went suddenly down. In order to re-establish them in a good farm, a large sum of money was placed at their command. Yet, to their credit be it recorded, barely half the amount was ever called upon, and before many years had passed over—such had been their prosperity—they were enabled to repay—but such was disallowed—to the utmost farthing, what, in their own minds, had been accepted only as a loan.

Lorance now continued to make annual visits to the family, which was afterwards increased by some additional little ones, one of whom received the name of their benefactor; but he took a partial interest in the second boy, whom he professed to claim as his own found property.

## CHAPTER XII.

## CONCLUSION.

Our narrative, like a drama in its last act on the public stage, is drawing to a close. There remains but one chapter in the adventurous life of our subject which concerns our purpose. The object of his present journey to Scotland has been attained, and his thoughts are now turned southward. He is thinking of his pretty little dwelling in Kent, with its chaste furniture and rosy parterre, in which his fond parents vainly



hoped to end their days. But before he makes his final bow to those wild scenes among the Lowland hills, in which, as we have seen, he has indulged his taste and followed his humours, we must continue to follow his footsteps.

The singular incident which brought Lorance Langton, as a stranger charged with a grave offence, into the company of Captain Eyecastle, then sitting on the magisterial bench in a public court, has, curious as it may appear, led to a friendly intimacy, which has continued to increase between the gentlemen ever since the event. From the frank, generous, and independent character of the magistrate, he seemed to entertain no scruple, affect no prudish or consequential reserve towards the stranger, who, though probably equally honourable and independent with himself, was yet without any other recommendation than his own personal tone and gentlemanly manners. The subsequent discovery of his early intimacy with Miss Keith, now a

visitor at the castle, and her father's family, may, however, have tended materially to strengthen their friendship.

Upon his first familiar interview with the Captain, Lorance explained the object of his present sojourn in the neighbourhood; and now that he had accomplished his purpose, he felt desirous of communicating his success to the ladies, who had shown throughout a deep interest in the matter. He now therefore lost no time in making his way to the Castle, where he was always received with a cordial welcome. Mrs. Eyecastle was, indeed, gratified with the news of his success, while Miss Keith was quite sisterly in her congratulations.

But one step backward: on his way through the village upon the Castle estate, in which he had occasion to pause for a few seconds, Lorance learnt other news of scarcely less interest to him. Having exchanged a few words with one of the inhabitants, of whom he enquired after the

family he was proceeding to visit, he was informed in confidence, to the effect that Mrs. Yellowlees, the housekeeper at the Castle, had told in confidence Jessie Lightfoot, the housemaid, who had told in confidence Mrs. Merribody, the grocer's wife, who had again told in confidence all her customers, that the young lady, Miss Keith, was to be married in a fortnight to Mr. Goodhead, the lawyer, that the event was to come off in Edinburgh, and the Laird was going to give away the bride ; and that the leddy was going to give the breakfast in their town house in the same city.

“In that case,” said the horseman, in reply, “I must hasten onward to see what post of honour I am to occupy on so great an occasion.”

At the Castle the report, of which the visitor had not hitherto been ignorant, became a ready topic for conversation ; even here significant tokens in corroboration were not wanting. In-

deed, preparations for the coming event were not only visible among the ladies, but had been in actual progress for several days past. Nor had the recent frequency of Miss Keith's communications to Lorance himself left him unadvised in the matter. The wedding-day had been fixed upon, and now little more than a week supervened; of course he was to be present at the marriage of his "sister." Things having thus far assumed the definite form of certainty, Lorance now bethought himself of fulfilling a promise he had made to his old ally, Thomas Duncan, namely, to furnish the roving merchant with the address of the young lady; he therefore turned up his note-book and penned to him the following letter:—

“DEAR SIR,

“I have now the satisfaction of communicating to you the address of Miss Grizell Keith, and of confirming the rumour you had

heard of her intended marriage. The day fixed for the event is the 23rd inst., and from the 13th up to that date the lady will be residing at No. —, Morray Place, Edinburgh. As I am to be present at the nuptials, my brief stay in town will be, as usual, at the Royal Hotel. Should this letter reach you, and should you find it convenient to be in Edinburgh about that time, I will be glad to see you once more before I return to England.

“I am happy to inform you that, through the excellent services of Mr. Sherra, your friend, I have succeeded in discovering the distant relation of whom I once desired of you the favour to make some inquiry on your travels. Accept the best remembrances of your sincere well-wisher,

“LORANCE LANGTON.”

Before taking his final departure from his little inn, now become so agreeably associated in

his mind with the elven bowers and crystal streams in its neighbourhood, which had afforded him so much intrinsic pleasure and scope to his fancy, he resolved upon making a farewell visit to some of those humble worthies whose acquaintance he had made during his sojourn at the Creels. Distinguished among these were John Dods and Robin Rawburn.

To the schoolmaster of Kittlenaket he addressed a letter, requesting the favour of his company at a dinner, on the 23rd, to be given in the inn, to such neighbours as had contributed to his gratification during his stay, and to represent him by occupying the chair of honour on the occasion, as an engagement to be in Edinburgh on that day would deprive himself of the pleasure. For the invitation to Dods and Rawburn, he was his own messenger; and he further deputed the latter to invite sundry others of less notability.

A post-chaise had been provided to convey

him to the first convenient town; and after having discharged all his obligations at the inn, not forgetting the now downcast Nelly, together with pre-paying amply the forthcoming dinner, he drove off, with his faithful dove seated on her perch in the floor of the carriage. His departure cast quite a gloom on the place behind him. His affable and kindly manners had here, as elsewhere, won for him the affection of all with whom he had been surrounded.

On his arrival in Edinburgh, amongst his first leisure acts, was to despatch a messenger for Andrew Rutherford, to wait upon him at his hotel, for although, from his early training and social rank, his mind naturally associated itself with the more elevated and refined tastes of the time, he never forgot his obligations to the humbler classes, in whose simple sphere he had often experienced more genuine sentiment than is frequently to be found in the more artificial circles of society.

The worthy guide was not backward in responding to the call. Perceiving that he had sundry small commissions to be executed in town, Lorange desired him to attend at the hotel each morning, during his short stay, to there receive such orders as circumstances might require.

Edinburgh, with all its proverbial “reek”—though, verily, on the score of smoke, compared with most other of our great cities, it is sadly maligned—its Scotch mists, heavy in their kind; its rude winds, prone as they are to sport uncouthly with gentlemen in lofty hats—cruelly ungallant in their behaviour to ladies in airy skirts, and fearfully perplexing and disloyal to a treasonable degree towards some of Her Majesty’s illustrious northern regiments, is, nevertheless, high up on the world’s list of substantial wealth and refinements. Rich in domestic luxuries—rich in native fabrics, heroic tartans, jewels, trinkets, and a countless variety of other pretty knick-knacks, ranging in interest from the bur-



nished head of a horned ram, an Akendrum luggie, down to a checkered pincushion, all appealing through the plated windows with wonderful cunning and persuasion to the purse of the visitor. With these besetting allurements in the streets, our Scottish capital becomes a perilous place wherein to meet a pretty cousin or blushing bride. It is vain in a man walking in such company to affect blindness as he approaches one of these remorseless spectacles. If the vision of the gentleman on the occasion be unusually dim, that of the lady is usually upon the opposite extreme. "Oh, look here, George;" George does, at length, look, and see the fatal window. Then he looks into the pretty speaker's face, thinks over the sovereigns in his pocket, and thus yields himself up to the ordeal of phlebotomy.

It was not precisely in this perplexing predicament that George Gordon Goodhead and Lorance Langton were now observed to be

jocosely walking arm-in-arm along the smooth flagway in Princess Street, tripping up and down, out and in, to and from, sundry of these dangerous magazines, with the canny Andrew Rutherford bearing a mule's load of precious spoil in a basket behind them. There was no pretty cousin in their company—no lady here upon whose gentle shoulders to place the burthen of guilt. It was essentially a voluntary attempt at *felo de se* ; and had it unhappily been attended with fatal results, the award of an inquest, it is clear to foresee, must have been “Death under temporary insanity.”

At Moray Place preparations for the approaching event were very significant. Packages, vast and various, of millinery and other valuable commodities were pouring in to No. —, from all parts of the city ; and amongst others, and not the least interesting, were two handsome brides-cakes, crowned with confectionery cupids, in bows and arrows, with other fantastic designs in

ice. On the day preceding the eventful morning a breakfast table was set out, glittering in gold, silver, and crystal, that might have graced a royal board. Throughout the establishment all the domestics seemed up to their several posts. A knock or ring was no sooner imparted than open flew the door, as if a blithe footman or smiling maid, whichever was readiest, was posted within the keyhole. It is extraordinary what effect an approaching marriage has upon the minds and spirits of some people, especially among the unmarried fair ones, from forty downwards, even to fifteen. Mrs. Yellowlees, in her rick sable afternoon silk, was now frisking about the house, as she was never seen to have frisked before. Jessie Lightfoot, light in heart as in foot, was carolling like a mavis in a room overhead, and was here known for once in her time to infringe the rules of her mistress by bowing from the window to a policeman, who, pausing on his beat, was placidly surveying the front of the mansion.

“Talk of courage in man!” exclaimed Theophilus Smith, with his usual tone of decision on all knotty points; “talk of courage in man! By St. George, had I, with my physical powers (truly vast) but the courage of a woman, I’d beard a second Nemean lion in his den. I declare most solemnly that I have been to six weddings in my time, at one of which I myself represented the ace of trumps, and I never yet saw a bridegroom, on proceeding to the altar, that was not more in need of the bride’s arm than she of his, though some of these men displayed Waterloo medals. On that, the most memorable morning of my life, I shall never forget how, in essaying my toilet, I twice lathered my nose instead of my chin, so unsteady was my hand; and but for having swallowed nearly a bottle of champagne my quaking limbs had doubled under me in church; yet my beloved and heroic espoused, then only in her seventeenth year, stood as firm on her feet as an Egyptian obelisk, whilst I, after all, stood by her side more like the leaning tower

of Fisa. Of course, like many a gallant soldier, coming scatheless out of an action, my valour after the ceremony was prodigious."

Without intending to convey even an indirect impeachment of the advocate's courage, as a man, it were unworthy of us here to dissemble the fact that, as a bridegroom, he only added another to the six instances afforded us by Theophilus Smith. Indeed, it was remarked by one of his brethren of the bar, present at the nuptials, that he had often seen Mr. Goodhead, with a steadier step and brighter countenance, lead up to the great tribunal of the law with the life of a fellow creature in his hands. From such an appalling ordeal let us then turn away our footsteps. It is enough for us, in our discreet years of bachelorhood, to look to our own safety, and view such spectacles only from afar, maintain our neutral ground, and tender our sympathies to the sufferers. Let it then suffice here to say that the bells chimed merrily—which we suspect were invented, like

music for soldiers, to stir up their courage for the day's conflict—that six post chaises, with postilions in their saddles, adorned with white favours and gloves, rattled off with the loving parties, and gaily returned within the hour, and that we heard some tantalising smacks in the entrance hall, for the loss of our share in which we sought consolation in a convenient glass of Madeira. Mrs. Eyecastle met them within the threshold, and gallantly did the Captain claim his dues. It was indeed a transporting sight to witness the assembly in the drawing-room, and truly did we mourn within ourselves, as we calmly looked on, that such a happy scene should be purchased at the price of so many sighs. But an incident now occurred in another quarter of the house, which we cannot overlook.

A loud knock was heard at the door, which being promptly answered, the lady of the house was beckoned aside. Two persons outside, on express business, wished to have a word with

Mr. Langton. Mrs. Eyecastle, entering an ante-room, desired the men to be conducted thither. In a moment the sturdy form of the owner of the van, supported by Andrew Rutherford, stood uncovered before her. He was dressed "like a magistrate"—this on the authority of Jessie Lightfoot—and had a sealed parcel under his arm. He apologised for his intrusion at that untimely moment, but said he had travelled nearly fifty miles on the previous day, and arrived in Edinburgh about three o'clock in the morning; had taken a few hours of rest, then proceeded to the Royal Hotel, but finding himself too late to catch Mr. Langton there, was directed to Moray Place.

When this explanation had ended, the lady beckoned the visitors to be seated, and desired that they should partake of some of the good cheer of the morning festivity, while she would return to the company and choose the first favourable opportunity to inform Mr. Langton, who was then much engaged, of their presence.

Captain Eyecastle, on learning of their entrance, at once went to the anteroom, and held a little conversation with them.

“I have often heard Mr. Langton,” said the gentleman, “speak of you, Mr. Duncan, with much esteem, and of some Highland adventures you had with him, with great satisfaction and humour.”

“At Mr. Langton’s perfect convenience, sir, I should wish a word with him,” returned Duncan, after a smile at the former allusion. “I shall not detain him over a minute, or trespass longer upon this house at such an improper time for intrusion. I have a parcel here containing a present for Miss Keith—or, I should now rather say, Mrs. Goodhead—and I should like Mr. Langton to be the medium of offering it to her acceptance.”

The Captain smiled and said,

“But, Mr. Duncan, under present circumstances, I cannot permit you to depart so readily.



I must inform you that I am on the commission of peace, and as you have made a voluntary confession of a trespass, I shall hold it my duty to detain you in custody (seeing that you are a rover in the world) until either Mr. Langton or the lady herself become your surety. Meanwhile I must see that you and your fellow transgressor have something better than common prisoner's fare."

With this he turned to leave the room, but before he had reached the door, it softly turned upon its hinges, and in walked a liveried footman, with a rosette in his bosom, bearing a tray loaded with choice eatables, a bottle of champagne and other wines. By the servant they were requested to help themselves, as he had then many calls upon him.

"Aye, leave us alone for that, Mr. Butler," answered Andrew Rutherford, "for the law is already against us, an' we may as weel eat the goose as pluck her feathers."

They had not, however, sat many minutes when Mr. Langton, with his usual ready smile on his countenance, entered. He gave his hand with a hearty shake to his old and trusty friend, from whom he received an explanation why he had been so late in reaching Edinburgh.

“But what have we here?” inquired Lorance, casting his eyes upon a parcel on the table, bearing an inscription.

“It’s the bit marriage gift I spoke of,” answered Duncan, “and as I cannot expect to see the young lady on such an occasion, although I should travel as far again as I’ve come to do so, I will ask you, Mr. Langton, to present it in the name of one who, though a humble man, dearly loved her and all her father’s family.”

“No, no, Mr. Duncan,” said the other, “this will not do. Half the value of the gift, as you know, is in the presentation of it. I shall take care that you not only see, but present it in person to, the receiver. But for the present I must

leave you and Rutherford there to make yourselves happy," with which he left the room.

He had not been long absent, when the rustling of heavy robes and light footfalls were heard crossing the hall. The door was speedily opened, and the lady of the house made her second entry, with the beautiful bride by her side, Lorance following in the rear.

The visitors rose to their feet, and bowed with great solemnity.

After a few remarks had passed, Lorance now advanced to the table, and desired Mr. Duncan to present the gift in question. The latter then took the parcel into his hands, and said,

"Madame, although my tongue lang syne was more familiar with your title as Miss Grizell, I now crave the honour of your acceptance of this humble offering as a tribute, on your wedding day, of my regard, not only for yourself, but for the memory of your father's family; and permit me to wish you many years of health and happiness to wear it."

He then passed the parcel into the hands of the lady.

When the bride had received it, Mrs. Eye-castle observed an address upon the cover, and said with a smile,

“Why, friend, there must be some mistake here. I fear I have brought to you the wrong lady, for I see it is addressed to Mrs. Goodhead, who is in the next room.”

The merchant looked bewildered; and in his perplexity, ejaculated.

“Why, madame, I thought Miss Keith was the bride?”

“She is one of them,” returned the lady. “Good fortune has this morning favoured our house with two brides, and I have brought to you Mrs. Lorange Langton.”

At these words, poor Duncan well-nigh forgot the delicacy of his present situation in an outburst of mingled surprise and joyfulness. Nor could the ladies themselves, who had been previously aware of the misconception of the

merchant, refrain from giving vent to their mirth.

Lorance next drew the bride aside, and formally introduced her to the astonished owner of the van, as his espoused Grizell Keith. The lady held out her gloved hand, and received his with a very friendly shake.

“Weel, weel, Mr. Langton,” said Duncan, scarcely yet reconciled to the surprise, “I hardly expected this trick at your hands now, but it’s no the less welcome for all that; for it shows me that the world has not yet made you too grave to retain the taste of your boyhood for playing off your pleasant pranks upon the good folks about Comyn Crypt. One of them, I remember well to this hour, and I think I may as well tell it before the ladies by way of punishment to you, for having taken me in in this manner. It was when ye got yourself dressed up as a country lass, went to the parish minister and desired the banns of marriage to be published in the Kirk between

you and your aunt's respected butler, and it's my firm belief, sir, that but for the clandestine match getting wind, you would now, instead of a bridegroom to-day, have been a married woman of some years' standing."

This anecdote afforded much merriment, alike to the ladies and the subject of it. The bridal party then took a kindly leave of the two visitors, who, on their part, immediately rose and took their departure, but not before they had each received a goodly slice of bridecake.

Between Mr. Goodhead and Mrs. Huntley, with her daughter, there had subsisted a friendly intimacy of some years' duration, which in the course of time had led to an engagement on his part, and finally a marriage, with the young lady.

Meanwhile, during the progress of events, Miss Keith was almost a constant resident with her aunt, whether at home or elsewhere; and it so happened that the gossipers of the neighbour-

hood, either ignorant of, or dissatisfied with this matrimonial arrangement, thought proper to reverse the order of things, and to publicly betroth this lady to the advocate.

The parties principally interested in the matter, learning of this, at once appeared, as if by common consent, to tacitly favour rather than discourage the rumour; and it was an echo of this rumour that had reached the ears of Thomas Duncan, and had led him to infer that Miss Keith was to become the wife of Mr. Goodhead.

Nor in Lorance's own recent communication to him had there been the slightest intimation to the contrary—hence the address upon the parcel.

Nor was the worthy merchant this day the only surprised party by this event. A letter, announcing the intended marriage on this morning had been despatched to the Creels, in order that it should reach its destination for the forthcoming dinner.

It was addressed to Mr Sherra, to the care of

the landlady of the inn, with a request that it should be presented to the chairman, and the contents read aloud to the guests at the table.

Fortune, going hand in hand with the postman, favoured the project.

The reception of the news at the Creels, especially since Mr. Robin Rawburn was to be an auditor, we must leave to be imagined.

There are still gay figures and merry voices in the breakfast-room ; but these belong not to the heroes and heroines of the morning.

The advocate and his bride have fled, and Mr. and Mrs. Langton are now posting it merrily southward, on their way to the English border.

To say that the latter were a loving couple, were only to repeat what is said, or ought to be said, of every bride and bridegroom ; but in this instance the mutual love of the wedded pair derived an additional strength from early and tender associations, from childish joys and painful memories.



On the part of the lady, the seeds of affection for Lorance had been sown, as it were, in her cradle. It had therein germinated, shot up, and grown with her girlhood. It had lived, as an ingraft upon her being, through tempests and distresses of the heart, that had almost wrung the slender stem on which it hung from the earth; and it had since been cherished as a thing belonging to an early dream, that was never to return to her, sustaining itself through sombre years on the strength of its own fidelity.

And she thus loved him, not for her own sake only; she loved him for her lost sister's sake also.

Agnes, on her death-bed, had bequeathed to her all her wealth of heart—all her love for him; had made her the inheritor and dispenser of her legacy of devotion to him; bid her love him, if even for her sake and memory.

And thus it was, while Grizzel inwardly cherished and experienced the vitality of her own passion, she felt that she still possessed some

living remnant of her departed sister—her warm breath on her cheek, and her throbbing pulse in her veins.

And so it followed that, with this two-fold state of love, Lorange, on the other hand, felt that in the possession of his Grizzel, he had likewise a living representation of his devoted Agnes.

By easy stages, they arrived at their destination, in Kent.

On his pretty little property here, beautified by recent works, Lorange now became conscious that he once more possessed a home in reality.

Grizzel was charmed with the house, and its situation ; while her presence, in the eyes of her lord, lent a new interest to everything around her.

The turf and flowers on the parterre appeared with unwonted freshness ; the roses bloomed with additional beauty, and the violets uttered a sweeter scent.

Kent, however, with its sunny climate and

chequered landscapes, was not destined to possess, as permanent residents, the happy couple.

Scotland had an earlier and stronger claim upon their hearts, and she asserted it.

The stern scenery of the Highlands, its weird in every wind, its rugged cliffs and rapid torrents, had for them a charm which was not to be found in the balmy vales and sluggish streams of the south. Comyn Crypt, the scene of Lorance's boyhood, with its proximity to the Kymes, the birth place of Grizell, offered them a second home of irresistible attractions, which they must share with the first. Two distinct household establishments, though limited as occasion required, were therefore formed, and they commonly spent the winter season in the south and the summer in the north. Nor, with this arrangement, did Lorance forget his friends and former scenes of adventure among the Lammermoors.

Some few years after his marriage, a post chaise

arrived at the Creels, and out stepped Lorance, amid the greetings of the simple inmates, now with his wife, and a son in the fifth year of his age. The child was a beautiful, fair, chubby, active, and courageous little fellow, and withal, well worthy of his father, and of his title of "little Lorry the Second." He might have sat or stood as a model for an infant Hercules, toned down to a somewhat enlarged statue of Cupid. This intended visit had been announced, and the inn was in full preparation for them. While the maid was being assisted down from her seat on the dicky, the landlady approached to take charge of the child, and remarked that she had never in her life seen so handsome a boy.

"O! then you have not seen papa when he was like me; for Colonel Frazer" (an Indian officer, who had known papa in his infancy), "says he was handsomer than I am; now, wasn't he, mamma?"

This unexpected reply of the little fellow, ac-

accompanied by the innocent appeal to his mamma, caused considerable amusement, especially to his parents; since the lady herself was not even in being, nor yet for some years afterwards, when Lorange was of his age.

Here, while making a brief stay (extending to four days), Lorange invited around him a few of the humbler friends and acquaintances of his former sojourn, the drover and schoolmaster among the number. Robin Rawburn, with his blunt and humorous remarks, afforded much merriment to Grizell.

“Bee my faith! Mr. Langton,” he exclaimed, as he took the child by the hand, “yin may kidnap a great many little babbies before he could lay his hands on sic a yin as this second I hae found in your possession.”

This caused great laughter.

John Dods was now destined to once more conduct his former charge through some of those wild scenes on the banks of the Dye and Watch,

which were associated in his mind with some of the most singular and pleasing incidents of his life, and which continued to possess a sort of charmed interest for him.

Lorance had long promised to take his wife to view these primitive haunts of witch and fairy, the lady having a taste for the romantic quite in harmony with his own. The weather being fine, they then set out from the Creels, and, after a circuitous drive, arrived at within a few minutes, walk of the locality. They now wandered about through the flowery woods, and by the side of the whimpling streams; now imagining the elves in their pretty habitations, their cosy dells, curtained around by the embowering birch and hazel; now bathing their hands in the crystal pools; now admiring the perfect miniature landscapes, vignettied down by the kindly hand of nature to suit the fairy capacity. As to the little, lively fellow by their side, he frolicked among the flowers and coy insects, clambered among the low and bending trees, as if he wished

to impose upon his father the belief that he now saw a second faun in the woods.

The first impression of an echo upon this child's mind deserves to be noticed. The boy was at a little distance in advance, and being observed by his mother on a slight eminence in a thoughtful or listening attitude, she enquired if anything were the matter.

"O! mamma," he replied, with a peculiar expression on his countenance, "the world's calling to me."

He had heard the reverberation of his own voice in the valley.

But what of our guide? Well, we must have a parting word with John. Yes; John Dods has been at his old droll and fanciful work. With his inherent or pretended dread of his old foes, the witches, he has not refrained this day from directing the especial attention of the company to the very plentiful supply the banks afforded of that sovereign remedy of his against their wicked devices—the anti-magic rod, the roan tree. And

in order that the party should be fortified against any sudden sortie or surprise from the camp of the grannyhood, he had (on the request of Lorance) provided each member with a small rod. On their way through the woods, a hare chanced to leave her seat and scud up the bank before them.

“Is that not the famous witch you have spoken of, John?” inquired Mrs. Langton.

“Na, na, mem,” answered John, with a smile, “I could tell the auld crone among a thoosand hares, bee the white ring roond her neck an’ the hole in her lug.”

“What made the hole in her ear, John?”

“Some say it was dune bee a silver sixpence shot at her; but others tell she came by it when she was an auld wife, for wishing a puir man’s cou t’ dee. She got nail’d up t’ a tree for’t bee the lug, an’ brak away, an’ took t’ the wuds ever after.”

“Then how did she get the ring mark round her neck?”



“There are tway ways o’ that story too, mem,” replied the guide, with a comical but very questionable gravity. “Some tell it was dune bee wearing the de’il’s beeds or necklace ; other folks say that it was bee trying t’ snare her, but she aye brak the girns, though they left their merks on her neck.”

“I’m afraid, then, John,” added the lady, laughing, “as in the case of most fickle women, there is nothing else for you than to bear with her caprices, and allow her to die a natural death.”

“Then, leddie, deer kens when that will happen,” said John, with seeming despair, “for, if a’s true, it’s said she was alyve a gye while afore my grandfather’s time, an’ it’s alleged she has a lease o’ life frae Satan, t’ last as lang as Locker-maykiss manse stands, an’ it’s no lang syn it was built.”

“Now, Dods,” said Lorange, interrupting the conversation, “I want to protect my house in England against all danger under this head.

Will you, therefore, find me a small sapling with its root, bind it up with a little of the native clay and damp grass, and include with it two or three plants of those beautiful primroses."

The request was promptly complied with, and (to shorten our account) they are now flourishing as simple memorials of the event, under the zealous care of their fair owner, in front of her pretty residence in Kent.

In conclusion, it remains only to be added that Lorance Langton and Grizell Keith, happy in their union, happy in their children, and ample in their fortune, may now (in 1866) be occasionally seen among the fashionable travellers, passing to and fro between the two capitals of our island, under the care of the officers of the Great Northern Railway.

THE END.

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